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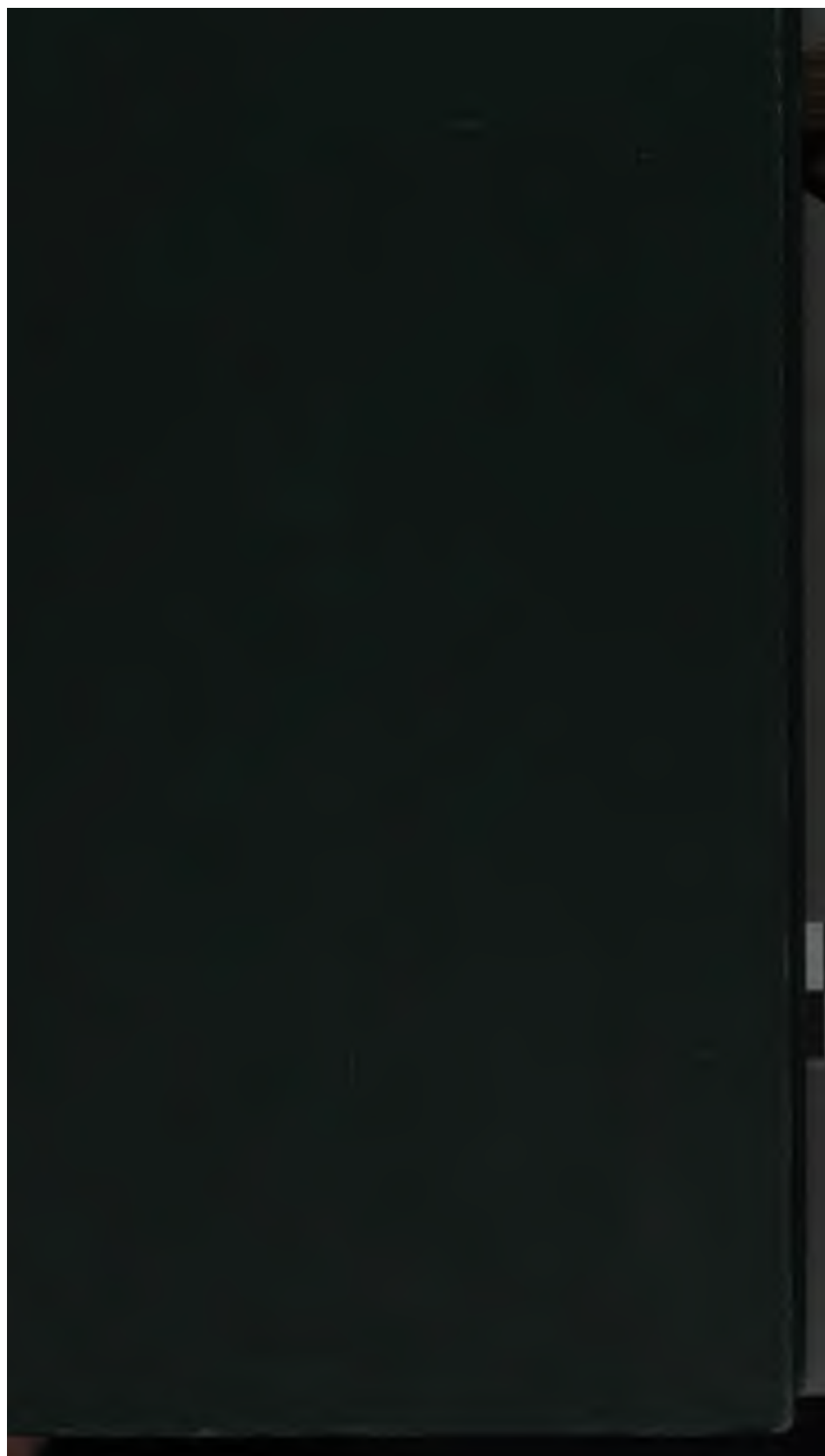
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**A N
E S S A Y
ON THE
ORIGIN OF EVIL.**

**BY
Dr. WILLIAM KING,**
Late Lord Archbishop of Dublin.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN, WITH NOTES.

To which is added,
A SERMON by the same Author,
ON THE
FALL OF MAN.

THE FIFTH EDITION, REVISED.

By EDMUND, Lord Bishop of CARLISLE.

Εἰπερ ἢ ἄλλος τις τοπος τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἐξιτασιῶς διαμοιρῶς, διδραστεῶς ἐστὶ τῆ
φύσεως ἡμῶν, ἢ τούτοις καὶ ἡ τῶν κακῶν ταχθεὶς ἀντίστισις. Orig. cent.
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P R E F A C E.

AN enquiry into the cause and origin of evil, has always been esteemed one of the noblest and most important subjects in natural theology. It leads us into several sublime speculations, concerning the Divine Attributes, and the original of things.—It endeavours to discover the true intent of the Deity in creating any thing, and pursues that intent thro' the various works of his creation;—contemplates the Divine œconomy—examines the various plans of Providence in the protection and government of the universe, and takes in the whole compass of nature. Neither is its usefulness inferior to its extent. Nor is it of less moment to every rational being, when he comes to the full use of his reason, and is disposed to employ it to some better purpose, than that of living on merely at random in this transitory world. He will find the knowledge of it to be in some degree necessary, under all the doubts and difficulties that may attend the sub-

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ject,

ject, if he proposes to act upon any serious and settled views here, or to entertain any well grounded hopes of futurity. When I begin to enquire how I came into this world at first, and was doomed to my present station, I am told that an absolutely perfect Being produced me out of nothing, and placed me here to communicate some part of his happiness and perfection to me.—This end is not obtained;—the contrary full often appears to be fact:—I find myself surrounded with perplexity and confusion, want and misery,—by whose fault I know not, nor find how to better my condition;—what comfortable notion of the Divine Attributes can this afford me?—what proper ideas of religion, under such circumstances?—what solid expectation of any future state? For if God's great aim in producing me be neither his *glory*, which my present situation seems to be far from advancing; nor my own good; with which the same seems to be equally inconsistent; how know I in what manner I am to conduct myself?—how must I endeavour to please him?—or why should I endeavour it at all? For if I must be miserable in this world, as from my present view of things appears to be the case; what security is there, that I shall not be so in another too, (if there should be one) since if it were the original intention of my Almighty Creator, I might, for aught I see, have been made capable of happiness in them both? Such reflections as these, must needs disturb a person that has any real concern for his Maker's honour, or his own ultimate happiness;—that desires to make some returns of a suitable homage to the Supreme Lord of all, and answer the true end of his own creation;—in short, that happens to think at all upon these matters, and to think for himself:—an attempt therefore to rid the mind

mind of these perplexities, cannot surely be unacceptable.—But both the usefulness and antiquity of that celebrated controversy, concerning evil, as well as the notorious absurdity of the *Manichean* method of accounting for it, have been so frequently and fully set forth, that there is no need of enlarging upon them, since all that ever seemed necessary to a complete conquest over those wild Hereticks, and their extravagant Hypothesis, was only some tolerable solution of the difficulties which drove them into it; and this our Author has accomplished, as I hope to make appear in the sequel. There are two general ways of reasoning, termed arguments, *a priori* and *a posteriori*, or according to what is usually stiled the *synthetic* and *analytic* method; the one lays down some previous, self evident principles; and in the next place, descends to the several consequences that may be deduced from them; the other begins with a view of the phænomena themselves, traces them up to their original, and by developing the properties of these phænomena, arrives at the knowledge of their cause. The former of these methods, where it can be had, is evidently preferable, since the latter must depend upon a large induction of particulars, any one of which failing, invalidates the whole argument; a proof therefore that the present subject is capable of the former method, must be very desirable; and this our Author seems to have exhibited without any ill-grounded, or precarious hypothesis whatsoever. He first of all enquires into the nature and perfections of the Deity, and the sole design which he can be supposed to have in the creation;—settles the true notion of a creature, and examines whether any such could be *perfect*; and if not, whether all of them should have



P R E F A C E.

been made *equally* imperfect, or several placed in various classes and degrees of imperfection : having proved the latter of these opinions to be most reasonable, he proceeds to the lowest class of beings, viz. material ones :—enquires into the essential properties of matter, and the necessary laws of its motion, and thereby directs us how to account for their effects, when disposed into various *masses*, and animated bodies. He shews the unavoidableness of *contrary motions*, for the same reason that it had any motion at all, and consequently of *attrition, fermentation, corruption, dissolution*, and all the pains, or natural evils, that attend them.

In the next place, from the nature of a *self* moving principle, and the manner of its operation, he deduces all the irregularities incident to *volition*. He states at large the true and only consistent notion of *free will*, and demonstrates the necessity for it in every rational creature, in order to its supreme happiness ; then accounts for the visible abuses of it, and the moral evils which arise from thence :—examines all the conceivable ways of preventing them, and upon the whole makes it apparent that none of these could have been originally guarded against, or might afterwards be removed, without introducing greater ; and consequently, that the permission of such evils, and the preservation of such frail beings, in their present forlorn estate, is an instance of wisdom, and goodness.

Now these are not mere arguments, *ad ignorantiam* ; —this is not *accepting the person* of the Almighty, (a service which he himself disclaims) by professing our belief, that such and such things are the work of an infinitely wise and gracious Governor of the Universe, where no marks of either wisdom or beneficence appear ;
tho'

tho' in some particular cases, this may perhaps be all that we have to offer ; yet, such an implicit subjection of our understandings in matters of Faith, can I presume, have little tendency towards either the conversion of a sober infidel, or the satisfaction of a rational believer. When a person is seriously contemplating any parts of Nature, and solicitously enquiring into the ends and uses of them ; no pleasure surely can arise to himself, nor any true, lively Devotion to their Author, merely from the unaccountableness of these parts ; nay, every such instance one would imagine must rather cast a damp upon his spirit, and produce nothing more than an uncomfortable reflection upon his own weakness,—a mortifying argument of his ignorance and imperfection. Whereas a single difficulty cleared up, or an objection compleatly answered, is a piece of useful knowledge gained ; whereupon he can chearfully congratulate himself, and glorify his Maker. Our Author therefore was not contented with evading difficulties, by removing all defects from external things to ourselves,—by multiplying instances of the narrowness, and weakness of our understanding, (of which any thoughtful person will soon be convinced, and of course wish to find it somewhat enlarged and improved, to which this kind of argumentation contributes very little), but he attacks his adversaries in their strongest holds, and plucks up that ancient Heresy by the roots. He shews by pre-established rules, and the necessary consequence of these rules, that we can reduce all to one Supreme Head, and comprehend how the present state of things, surrounded as it is with darkness, may yet be the best, and worthy of a most wise, powerful, and beneficent Author ; and why taking the whole
system

system of created Beings together, and every *class* of them in its own order, none could have been more perfect, or placed in a more eligible situation. He demonstrates, that in the first place, no created beings could be absolutely perfect; and in the second, that no kind of imperfection was permitted amongst them, but what in their class and order of existence was either unavoidable, or productive of some good, more than equivalent; in both cases, there will be the same reason for creating such, together with their concomitant evils, as there was for any Creation at all, for which the sole ground will appear to be an uniform determination, of communicating happiness to as many Beings as could consistently be made capable of it, on the best terms possible; or an intention never to omit the least degree of *pure* good, on account of any such evils as cleave to it, yet do not on the whole counterbalance it;—or, which is the very same, (since it will appear that the prevention of all the present evils, would have been of worse consequence than the permission of them) a resolution always to choose the less of two inconveniences, when both could not be avoided. This must be granted to come up to the point, and when it is once made evident, will be a sufficient answer to the old triumphant query *ποθι τὸ κακόν*; it will prove an ample vindication of the power, wisdom and goodness of God in the production, government and preservation of the universe, and as much as a reasonable man can with any shew of reason expect. And it is greatly to be wished, that this method had been taken, by more of those Authors that have written on the present subject, and the argument pursued a little farther, by the light of Nature, in order to add some light and confirmation

firmation to Revelation itself in these very captious times ; wherein a great many persons are unwilling to be determined by its authority alone. And yet some of the most able writers on the subject, often fly to Scripture when a difficulty begins to press them, which appears to be acknowledging with *Bayle*, * that the point cannot be maintained on any other foot. Whereas if the objection be really unanswerable by Reason ; —if, as the forementioned author urges, ‘ we perceive ‘ by our clear and distinct ideas, that such a thing is ‘ entirely repugnant to the Divine nature and attributes,’ referring us to Scripture, which declares that such an all perfect Being did constitute it after this manner, will be but small satisfaction, since we can have no greater assurance that the Scripture comes from him, than we have that the Doctrine said to be contained therein is absurd and impossible. What that Writer’s real intent might be in representing the matter thus, is not very easy to determine : sure I am, that his whole account of it serves rather to betray the cause, and undermine the authority both of Reason and Revelation, and is enough to induce a person who argues consequentially, to reject all kinds of Religion ; tho’ I have been informed that it had not this effect on *Bayle* himself. Farther, most Authors here treat of the Almighty’s dispensations toward mankind, as if they were considering men’s behaviour towards each other. They think it enough to make him chuse the most likely means of leading us to happiness, and act upon the highest probability ; though upon some account or other, he fail of his end. This may indeed be the very best way of proceeding in all finite, imperfect Beings, and prove sufficient to acquit the justice and the goodness

* See an explanation touching the *Manichees*, at the end of his Dictionary

ness of their Maker, but is far from answering the general idea of his wisdom.

To a Being who foresees all the effects of every chain of causes, or combination of means and events, which the same Authors allow to be one property of the Divine Nature, those only must prove eligible, which will *certainly* conduce to the end proposed; nor is it a sufficient reason, why he should pursue a method which is apt to succeed in most cases; if he knows it will fail in this: an inquisitive person who takes all the attributes of God together, and contemplates the whole plan of Providence, will hardly judge it a complete vindication of them, to assert that God either now makes men, or suffers them to make themselves, miserable for rejecting that portion of felicity which he at first formed them capable of, by endowing them with such powers, and placing them in such circumstances as rendered it easy to be attained by them;—tho' this may clear his justice, as I have said, and fix the blame upon ourselves: and yet these writers generally content themselves with going thus far. They derive all our sin, and consequent misery, from the abuse of *free will* (i. e. a principle or power which enabled us to have acted otherwise than we did act, and thereby have prevented it) without explaining the true nature of this principle, the manifold use and excellence of it, and shewing that, so far as we can conceive, more good arises to our whole species from the donation of such a self-moving power, together with all its foreseen abuses, than could have been produced without it. To demonstrate this, was an undertaking worthy of our Author, who has at least laid a good foundation for it, and seems to be the first that ever proposed the
true

true notion of human liberty, and pursued it consistently ; most of the doubts attending which intricate subject, will, I hope, be tolerably well cleared up, or at least such principles established as may suffice for that purpose, by this Treatise of his, and the Notes upon it. I shall only add here, that those *Notes* which have capital Letters prefixed to them, belong properly to the Author himself, the substance of them being communicated by his Grace's Relations, out of a great number of papers prepared by him, in defence of this Book, on which he set so high a value as to take the pains of vindicating it from the least cavil ; in which view all that he wrote would make a much larger Volume than the Book itself, wherein some think that there has been produced an abundantly sufficient number of objections, with such particular answers as the then imperfect state of Philosophy required.

The *Preliminary Dissertation* was composed chiefly by the late Rev. Mr. *Gay*, and deserves to keep its place among some others of a similar kind, since it is upon a subject that can never be too much inculcated, tho' this may occasion some repetitions, and the dryness which has been complained of, must amply be compensated by a degree of accuracy, and precision, which cannot fail of recommending it to an attentive reader ; who may probably deduce more consequences from the principle laid down there, than are explicitly pointed out.

In the present Edition of *A. B. King's* essay, the bulk has been considerably reduced by omitting several things, that were somewhat foreign to the main design of this Treatise ; particularly his noted Sermon upon *Predestination*, which being wholly founded on the doctrine

trine of *Analogy*, has been considered, and the ground of it removed in remark. L. p. 70. and else where, as also the old P. S. containing a dispute on some points of Dr. *Clarke's* philosophy, which appear to be now out of date. In lieu of these reductions, perhaps I may be excused for taking the liberty to introduce a few particulars, relative to my own course of proceeding on the present subject; and so far as the same author's method of prosecuting it is concerned.

At my first entrance on the study of Philosophy, of morals in particular, it was my principal endeavour to get a competent knowledge of the several systems then in vogue, as well as of the general powers, and properties of human nature, and the rules by which they ought to be directed; taking Mr. *Locke* for one of my chief guides in such enquiries. During some progress made in this study, and consulting such authors as might be of most service on the occasion, about the year 1723, I met with Archb. *King's* Essay on the Origin of Evil, in which there appeared to be so many useful points of Theology, comprised in something like a consistent Theory, as deserved my more particular attention, and at length determined me to pursue the like plan, and try to digest its several parts in such order, as to set the whole in a proper light; resolving that if I should ever be tempted to offer any thing to the public on those subjects, it should be done by shewing a due piece of gratitude to this my original instructor, in carefully reviewing his positions, and adding such illustrations as seemed to be more immediately requisite, instead of borrowing his materials to erect a pompous edifice in my own name, according to the usual mode of authorship. This more modest way of philosophising, appeared to be likewise generally the most instructive,

tive, tho' perhaps less entertaining to some premature adventurers, who were discouraged at their first setting out, by a few uncouth things about the beginning of our author's book, which might perhaps as well have been omitted, could that have been done without too much mangling or defacing of his work;—however, such delicate readers as will take offence at what they term too heavy an *Exordium*, may probably find their disgust relieved, by beginning either at the third section of the second Chapter: or at Chapter the third; which method is here accordingly recommended to them.

To proceed. I had now the satisfaction of seeing that those very principles which had been maintained by Archb. King, were adopted by Mr. Pope in his *Essay on Man*; this I used to recollect, and sometimes relate, with pleasure, conceiving that such an account did no less honour to the Poet, than to our Philosopher; but was soon made to understand that any thing of that kind was taken highly amiss, by one who had once held the Doctrine of that same *Essay* to be rank *Atheism*, but afterward turned a warm advocate for it, and thought proper to deny the account above-mentioned, with heavy menaces against those who presumed to insinuate that Pope borrowed any thing from any man whatsoever. The fact, notwithstanding such denial, might have been strictly verified by an unexceptionable testimony, viz. that of the late Lord Batbursf, who saw the very same system of the *Te Dilation* (taken from the Archbishop) in Lord Bolingbroke's own hand, lying before Mr. Pope while he was composing his *Essay*.

This point may also be cleared effectually, when ever any reader shall think it worth his while to compare the two pieces together; and observe how exactly they tally with each other.—But enough of these trifling particulars,

particulars, which have detained me from a more important point intended for this place viz. Surveying the too general turn of our University education. Having therefore about the time above-mentioned (1723) remarked some abuses in the training up of our youth, by beginning it with inculcating the dull, crabbed, system of *Aristotle's* Logic, and at a time when they were least capable of applying that to any valuable purpose ;—by persisting to retail such an idle system, even after it was grown obsolete, and not rather laying some solid foundation in Natural Philosophy with its modern improvements, or *Natural Law* (as the whole Doctrine of *Morals* is now termed) which would be of constant use to these young disciples, in what way of life soever they might afterwards be engaged, and likewise help to settle in them right notions of Religion ; which would above all things tend to make them more sober minded, and consequently more submissive to their superiors here, as well as more happy in themselves for ever hereafter :—reflecting on these absurdities which still prevailed in our public forms of education—some of my friends were induced to seek a remedy, by freeing their pupils from all that pedantic jargon, and introducing some better means to engage their attention, and accustom them to a close, regular way of thinking, and thereby prosecuting their future studies with greater accuracy and precision ; to this end they called in the assistance of the *Mathematics*, little then imagining, that in a short time these same assistants,—these comparatively meagre *Instruments*,—should like *Pharaoh's* lean kine, eat up all that was good and well favoured in the sciences themselves ;—that they should usurp the place of those very sciences to which they were originally designed to be subservient,

vent, and for which station they were sufficiently qualified: but such became the common infatuation, that these helps for conducting an enquiry thro' the whole *Cyclopædia*, instead of continuing to perform such useful offices, were by the mere force of *Fashion*, set up for a capital branch of it, and the best part of our Scholar's time spent in speculating on these same *Instruments*; which would in any other case appear perhaps to be somewhat preposterous. However, these favourite *Speculations* did not at first so far engross all the thoughts of our young Students, as not to admit some points of a moral and metaphysical kind to accompany them: which last held their ground for above twenty years, and together with Mr. *Locke's* Essay Dr. *Clarke* went hand in hand thro' our public schools and lectures, tho' they were built on principles directly opposite to each other; the latter of them founding all our moral knowledge, on certain innate *Instincts*, or *absolute Fitnesses* (however inconsistent these two terms may appear), the former being wholly calculated to remove them: till at length certain flaws being discovered in the Doctor's celebrated argument *a priori*, (on the truth of which many minute philosophers had wholly pinned their faith) his doctrine fell into disrepute, and was generally given up; but its downfall at the same time, sunk the credit of that whole science; as to the certainty of its principles, which thereby received so great a shock, as is hardly yet recovered. This threw us back into a more eager attachment than ever to its rival the *Mathematics*, which grew from henceforth into a most important, and most laborious study; being confined chiefly to the deepest, and most difficult parts of them, and taking up the student's whole time and pains; so as to become incompatible with

with any other, much more necessary studies, as will appear below. And here one cannot avoid stopping to lament, the notorious weakness of the human mind ; which instead of exerting its own native powers of examining and judging in points of Faith, is ever apt to shelter itself under some sorry system of opinions, accidentally thrown in its way ; and thro' mere indolence, or perhaps dread of that *odium theologicum*, which too often attends on each attempt toward any improvement, or what is called innovation, (tho' it be no more in reality than removing those innovations made by time, the greatest of all *innovators*, according to Lord *Bacon*), sits down contented with its ancient state of ignorance, and blind credulity, willing to connive at all those gross and glaring absurdities that have long beset it ; and been suffered to continue in so many learned and religious societies. But it is hoped that most of these are already seen thro', and will shortly be discarded by the laudable endeavours of the University of *Cambridge* in particular, which is labouring to reform such abuses, and restore its credit to that first degree in Arts, and the Exercise preparatory to it, which was once the peculiar glory of this place : and whereupon not only the academical character of each candidate, but likewise his success in life does still very much depend ; well aware that this long desired piece of reformation, can never be secured effectually but by a careful and impartial distribution of those honours which usually attend the said promotion, a prospect whereof is found to be the great object of ambition, to many of these young men from the very time of their admission into College ; to this they often sacrifice their whole stock of strength and spirits, and so entirely devote most of their first four years to what is called *taking a good degree*, as to be hardly good for any thing else,

else, least of all for a proper discharge of that important duty to which the greatest part of them were originally destined, and which ought to be the chief business of their future lives ; but to which alas ! they have hitherto been utter strangers. A sad truth ! of which we are made very sensible in the mortifying office of examining such persons for holy orders.

But enough of these painful, and disagreeable reflections ; and if in my repeated endeavours to remove the grounds of them, there should occur too many egotisms, or other marks of exhibiting my own importance, thro' a long narrative of circumstances now little understood, and perhaps less regarded, by any body besides ; this must plead my excuse with every candid reader ; the same also will, it is hoped, be admitted for any too censorious asperities, which may have escaped one who could not easily be imagined to have any thing in view beside the general reformation and improvement, much less an intention to cast unnecessary aspersions on those sacred seats of literature, whence he gratefully professes to have reaped so great advantages as to make it his delight, when ever occasion offers, to applaud and support all their really useful institutions, as has been shewn in a small tract to that purpose, entitled *Observations on the present state of the English Universities*, and published A. D. 1759, with the bare mention of which anonymous publication, I must beg leave to conclude this long Preface.



PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION.

CONCERNING THE

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

OF

VIRTUE OR MORALITY.

THOUGH all writers of morality have in the main agreed what particular actions are virtuous and what otherwise, yet they have, or at least seem to have differed very much, both concerning the *Criterion* of Virtue, viz. what it is which *denominates* any action virtuous; or, to speak more properly, what it is by which we must try any action to *know* whether it be virtuous or no; and also concerning the *Principle*, or motive, by which men are induced to pursue Virtue.

As to the former, some have placed it in *acting agreeably to nature*, or *reason*; others in the *fitness of things*; others in a conformity with *truth*; others in promoting the *common good*; others in the *will of God*, &c. This disagreement of moralists concerning the rule or Criterion of Virtue in general, and at the same time their almost perfect agreement concerning the particular branches of it, would be apt to make one suspect, either that they had a different Criterion (though they did not know or attend to it) from what they professed; or (which perhaps is the true as well as the more favourable opinion) that they only talk a different language, and that all of them have the same Criterion in reality, only they have expressed it in different words.

And there will appear the more room for this conjecture,

ture, if we consider the ideas themselves about which morality is chiefly conversant, *viz.* that they are all *mixed. modes*, or compound ideas, arbitrarily put together, having at first no archetype or original existing, and afterwards no other than that which exists in other men's minds. Now since men, unless they have these their compound ideas, which are signified by the same name, made-up precisely of the same simple ones, must necessarily talk a different language; and since this difference is so difficult, and in some cases impossible to be avoided, it follows that greater allowance and indulgence ought to be given to these writers than any other: and that (if we have a mind to understand them) we should not always take their words in the common acceptation, but in the sense in which we find that particular author which we are reading used them. And if a man interpret the writers of morality with this due candour, I believe their seeming inconsistencies and disagreements about the Criterion of Virtue, would in a great measure vanish; and he would find that *acting agreeably to nature*, or *reason*, (when rightly understood) would perfectly coincide with the *fitness of things*; the fitness of things (as far as these words have any meaning) with *truth*; truth with the *common good*; and the common good with the *will of God*.

But whether this difference be real, or only verbal, a man can scarce avoid observing from it, that mankind have the ideas of most particular Virtues, and also a confused notion of Virtue in general, before they have any notion of the Criterion of it; or ever did, neither perhaps can they, deduce all or any of those Virtues from their idea of Virtue in general, or upon any rational grounds shew how those actions (which the world call moral, and most, if not all men evidently have ideas of) are distinguished from other actions, or why they approve of those actions called moral ones, more than others.

However, since the idea of Virtue among all men (notwithstanding their difference in other respects) includes

cludes either tacitly or expressly, not only the idea of *approbation* as the consequence of it ; but also that it is to every one, and in all circumstances, an object of *choice* ; it is incumbent on all writers of morality, to shew that *that* in which they place Virtue, whatever it be, not only always will or ought to meet with approbation, but also that it is always an object of *choice* : which is the other great dispute among Moralists, *viz.* What is the Principle or Motive by which men are induced to pursue Virtue.

For some have imagined that *that* is the only object of choice to a rational creature, which upon the whole will produce more happiness than misery to the chooser ; and that men are, and ought to be guided wholly by this Principle ; and farther, that Virtue will produce more happiness than misery, and therefore is always an object of choice : and whatever is an object of choice, that we approve of.

But this, however true in Theory, is insufficient to account for matter of fact, *i. e.* that the generality of mankind do approve of Virtue, or rather virtuous actions, without being able to give any reason for their approbation ; and also, that some pursue it without knowing that it tends to their own private happiness ; nay even when it appears to be inconsistent with and destructive of their happiness.

And that this is a matter of fact, the ingenious Author of the *Enquiry into the Original of our Idea of Virtue* has so evidently made appear by a great variety of instances, that a man must be either very little acquainted with the World, or a mere *Hobbiſt* in his temper to deny it.

And therefore to solve these two difficulties, this excellent Author has supposed (without *proving*, unless by shewing the insufficiency of all other schemes) a *moral sense* to account for the former, and a *publick* or *benevolent affection* for the latter : And these, *viz.* the moral sense and public affection, he supposes to be implanted in us like *instincts*, independent of reason, and

previous to any instruction; and therefore his opinion is, that no account can be given, or ought to be expected of them, any more than we pretend to account for the pleasure or pain which arises from sensation; *i. e.* Why any particular motion produced in our bodies should be accompanied with pain rather than pleasure, and *vice versa*.

But this account seems still insufficient, rather cutting the knot than untying it; and if it is not a kin to the doctrine of *innate ideas*, yet I think it relishes too much of that of *occult qualities*. This ingenious author is certainly in the right in his observations upon the insufficiency of the common methods of accounting for both our *election* and *approbation* of moral actions, and rightly infers the necessity of supposing a moral sense (*i. e.* a power or faculty whereby we may perceive any action to be an object of approbation, and the agent of love) and public affections, to account for the principal actions of human life. But then by calling these *instincts*, I think he stops too soon, imagining himself at the fountain-head, when he might have traced them much higher, even to the true principle of all our actions, our own *happiness*.

And this will appear by shewing that our approbation of morality, and all affections whatsoever, are finally resolved into *reason* pointing out *private happiness*, and are conversant only about things apprehended to be means tending to this end; and that whenever this end is not perceived, they are to be accounted for from the *association of ideas*, and may properly enough be called *habits*.

For if this be clearly made out, the necessity of supposing a moral sense or public affections to be implanted in us, since it arises only from the insufficiency of all other schemes to account for human actions, will immediately vanish. But whether it be made out or no, we may observe in general, that all arguments *ad ignorantiam*, or that proceed *a remotione* only (as this, by which the moral sense and public affections are established to be instincts, evidently does) are scarce ever perfectly

rectly satisfactory, being for the most part subject to this doubt, *viz.* Whether there is a full enumeration of all the parts; and liable also to this objection, *viz.* That though I cannot account for phenomena otherwise, yet possibly they may be otherwise accounted for.

But before we can determine this point, it will be necessary to settle all the terms: We shall in the first place therefore enquire what is meant by the *Criterion of Virtue.*

S E C T. I.

Concerning the Criterion of Virtue.

THE Criterion of any thing is a rule or measure by a conformity with which any thing is known to be of this or that sort, or of this or that degree. And in order to determine the criterion of any thing, we must first know the thing whose criterion we are seeking after. For a measure presupposes the idea of the thing to be measured, otherwise it could not be known, whether it was fit to measure it or no, (since what is the proper measure of one thing is not so of another) Liquids, cloth, and flesh, have all different measures; gold and silver different touchstones. This is very intelligible, and the method of doing it generally clear, when either the quantity, or kind of any particular substance is thus ascertained.

But when we extend our enquiries after a Criterion for abstract, mixed modes, which have no existence but in our minds, and are so very different in different men; we are apt to be confounded, and search after a measure for we know not what. For unless we are first agreed concerning the thing to be measured, we shall in vain expect to agree in our criterion of it, or even to understand one another.

But it may be said, if we are exactly agreed in any mixed mode, what need of any *criterion*? or what can we want farther? What we want farther, and what we mean

mean by the criterion of it, is this; *viz.* to know whether any particular thing do belong to this mixed mode or no. And this is a very proper enquiry. For let a man learn the idea of Intemperance from you never so clearly, and if you please let this be the idea, *viz.* the eating or drinking to that degree as to injure his understanding or health; and let him also be never so much convinced of the obligation to avoid it; yet it is a very pertinent question in him to ask you, How shall I know when I am guilty of Intemperance?

And if we examine this thoroughly, we shall find that every little difference in the definition of a mixed mode will require a different criterion. *e. g.* If murder is defined the *wilful* taking away the life of another, it is evident, that to enquire after the Criterion of Murder, is to enquire how we shall know when the life of another is taken away *wilfully*; i. e. when one who takes away the life of another does it with that malicious design which is implied by *wilfulness*. But if murder be defined the *guilty* taking away the life of another, then to enquire after the criterion of murder, is to enquire how it shall be known when *guilt* is contracted in the wilful taking away the life of another. So that the criterion of murder, according to one or other of these definitions, will be different. For wilfulness perhaps will be made the criterion of guilt; but wilfulness itself, if it want any, must have some farther criterion; it being evident that nothing can be the measure of itself.

If the criterion is contained in the idea itself, then it is merely *nominal*, *e. g.* If virtue is defined, the acting agreeably to the will of God: to say the will of God is the criterion of virtue, is only to say, what is agreeable to the will of God is *called* Virtue. But the *real* criterion, which is of some use, is this, How shall I know what the Will of God is in this respect?

From hence it is evident, that the criterion of a mixed mode is neither the definition of it, nor contained in it. For, as has been shewn, the general idea is necessarily to be fixed; and if the *particulars* comprehended under it

are

are fixed or known also, there remains nothing to be measured; because we measure only things unknown. The general idea then being fixed, the criterion which is to measure or determine inferiors, must be found out and proved to be a proper rule or measure, by comparing it with the *general idea* only, independent of the inferior things to which it is to be applied. For the truth of the measure must be proved independently of the particulars to be measured, otherwise we shall prove in a circle.

To apply what has been said in general to the case in hand. Great enquiry is made after the criterion of *virtue*; but it is to be feared that few know distinctly what it is they are enquiring after; and therefore this must be clearly stated. And in order to this, we must (as has been shewn) first fix our idea of *Virtue*, and that exactly; and then our enquiry will be, how we shall know this or that less general or particular action to be comprehended under virtue. For unless our idea of virtue is fixed, we enquire after the criterion of we know not what. And this our idea of virtue, to give any satisfaction, ought to be so general, as to be conformable to that which all or most men are supposed to have. And this general idea, I think, may be thus expressed.

Virtue is the conformity to a rule of life, directing the actions of all rational creatures with respect to each other's happiness, to which conformity every one in all cases is obliged: and every one that does so conform, is or ought to be approved of, esteemed and loved for so doing. What is here expressed, I believe most men put into their idea of *Virtue*.

For *Virtue* generally does imply some relation to others: where *self* is only concerned, a man is called *prudent*, (not virtuous) and an action which relates immediately to *God*, is stiled *religious*.

I think also that all men, whatever they make *Virtue* to consist in, yet always make it to imply *obligation* and *approbation*.

The

The idea of Virtue being thus fixed, to enquire after the criterion of it, is to enquire what that rule of life is to which we are *obliged* to conform; or how that rule is to be found out which is to direct me in my behaviour towards *others*, which ought *always* to be pursued, and which, if pursued, will or ought to procure me *approbation, esteem, and love*.

But before I can answer this enquiry: I must first see what is meant by *Obligation*.

S B C T. II.

Concerning Obligation.

Obligation is the necessity of doing or omitting any action in order to be happy: i. e. when there is such a relation between an Agent and an action that the Agent cannot be happy without doing or omitting that action, then the agent is said to be *obliged* to do or omit that action. So that obligation is evidently founded upon the prospect of *happiness*, and arises from that necessary influence which any action has upon present or future happiness or misery. And no greater obligation can be supposed to be laid upon any *free agent* without an express contradiction.

This Obligation may be consider'd four ways, according to the four different manners in which it is induced: First, that obligation which ariseth from perceiving the natural consequences of things, *i. e.* the consequences of things acting according to the fix'd laws of nature, may be call'd *natural*. Secondly, that arising from merit or demerit, as producing the esteem and favour of our fellow creatures, or the contrary, is usually stiled *virtuous*. Thirdly, that arising from the authority of the civil magistrate, *civil*. Fourthly, that from the authority of God, *religious*.

Now from the consideration of these four sorts of obligation (which are the only ones) it is evident that a
full

full and complete obligation which will extend to all cases, can only be that arising from the authority of *God*; because God only can in all cases make a man happy or miserable: and therefore, since we are *always* obliged to that conformity called Virtue, it is evident that the immediate rule or criterion of it, is the Will of God.

The next enquiry therefore is, what that Will of God in this particular is, or what it directs me to do?

Now it is evident from the nature of God, *viz.* his being infinitely happy in himself from all eternity, and from his goodness manifested in his works, that he could have no other design in creating mankind than *their* happiness; and therefore he wills their happiness; therefore the means of their happiness: therefore that my behaviour, as far as it may be a means of the happiness of mankind, should be such. Here then we are got one step farther, or to a new criterion: not to a new criterion of virtue *immediately*, but to a criterion of the *will of God*. For it is an answer to the enquiry, How shall I know what the Will of God in this particular is? Thus the will of God is the immediate criterion of Virtue, and the happiness of mankind the criterion of the will of God; and therefore the happiness of mankind may be said to be the criterion of virtue, but *once removed*.

And since I am to do whatever lies in my power towards promoting the happiness of mankind, the next enquiry is, what is the criterion of this *happiness*: i. e. How shall I know what in my power is, or is not, for the happiness of mankind?

Now this is to be known only from the *relations* of things, (which relations, with respect to our present enquiry some have called their *fitness* and *unfitness*.) For some things and actions are apt to produce pleasure, others pain; some are convenient, others inconvenient for a society; some are for the good of mankind; others tend to the detriment of it; therefore those are to be chosen which tend to the good of mankind, the others to be avoided.

Thus

Thus then we are got one step farther, *viz.* to the criterion of the happiness of Mankind. And from this criterion we deduce all particular virtues and vices.

The next enquiry is, How shall I know that there is this fitness and unfitness in things? or if there be, how shall I discover it in particular cases? And the answer is either from experience or reason. You either *perceive* the inconveniences of some things and actions when they happen; or you *foresee* them by contemplating the nature of the things and actions.

Thus the criterion of the fitness or unfitness of things may in general be said to be *reason*: which reason, when exactly conformable to the things existing, *i. e.* when it judges of things as they are, is called *right reason*. And hence also we sometimes talk of the *reason of things*, *i. e.* properly speaking, that relation which we should find out by our reason, if our reason was right.

The expressing by outward signs the relation of things as they really are, is called *truth*; and hence by the same kind of metaphor, we are apt to talk of the *truth*, as well as *reason of things*. Both expressions mean the same: which has often made me wonder why some men who cry up *reason* as the criterion of virtue, should yet dislike Mr. *Wollaston's* notion of *truth* being its criterion.

The truth is, all these just mentioned, *viz.* the happiness of mankind; the relations, or fitness and unfitness of things; reason and truth; may in some sense be said to be criterions of virtue; but it must always be remembered that they are only *remote* criterions of it; being gradually subordinate to its immediate and proper criterion, the will of God.

And from hence we may perceive the reason of what I suggested in the beginning of this treatise, *viz.* That the dispute between moralists about the criterion of virtue is more in words than meaning; and that this difference between them has been occasioned by their dropping the immediate criterion, and choosing some a more remote, some a less remote one. And from hence we may see also the inconvenience of defining any mixed mode by its criterion. For that in a great measure has occasioned

sioned all this confusion ; as may easily be made appear in all the pretended criterions of virtue above mentioned.

Thus those who either expressly exclude, or don't mention the will of God, making the immediate criterion of virtue to be the good of mankind ; must either allow that virtue is not in all cases *obligatory* (contrary to the idea which all or most men have of it) or they must say that the good of mankind is a sufficient obligation. But how can the good of mankind be any obligation to *me*, when perhaps in particular cases, such as laying down my life, or the like, it is contrary to my happiness ?

Those who drop the happiness of mankind, and talk of the relations, the fitness and unfitness of things, are still more remote from the true criterion. For fitness, without relation to some *end*, is scarce intelligible.

Reason and truth come pretty near the relations of things, because they manifestly presuppose them ; but are still one step farther from the immediate criterion of virtue.

What has been said concerning the criterion of virtue as including our constant obligation to it, may perhaps be allowed to be true ; but still it will be urged, that it is insufficient to account for matter of fact, *viz.* that most persons, who are either ignorant of, or never considered these deductions, do however pursue virtue themselves, and approve of it in others. I shall in the next place therefore give some account of our approbations and affections.

S E C T. III.

Concerning Approbation and Affection.

MAN is not only a *sensible* creature ; not only capable of pleasure and pain, but capable also of *foreseeing* this pleasure and pain in the future consequences of things and actions ; and as he is capable of
know-

knowing, so also of *governing* or directing the causes of them, and thereby in a great measure enabled to avoid the one and to procure the other: whence the principle of all action. And therefore, as pleasure and pain are not indifferent to him, nor out of his power, he pursues the former and avoids the latter; and therefore also those things which are *causes* of them are not indifferent, but he pursues or avoids them also, according to their different tendency. That which he pursues for its own sake, which is only pleasure, is called an *End*; that which he apprehends to be apt to produce pleasure, he calls *Good*, and approves of, *i. e.* judges a proper means to attain his end, and therefore looks upon it as an object of choice; and that which is pregnant with misery he disapproves of and stiles *evil*. And this good and evil are not only barely approved of, or the contrary; but whenever viewed in imagination (since man considers himself as existing hereafter, and is concerned for his welfare then as well as now) they have a *present pleasure* or pain annexed to them, proportionable to what is apprehended to follow them in real existence; which pleasure or pain arising from the prospect of future pleasure or pain is properly called *Passion*, and the desire consequent thereupon, *Affection*.

And as by reflecting upon pleasure there arises in our minds a *desire* of it; and on pain, an *aversion* from it (which necessarily follows from supposing us to be sensible creatures, and is no more than saying, that all things are not physically *indifferent* to us) so also by reflecting upon good or evil, the same desires and aversions are excited, and are distinguished into *love* and *hatred*. And from love and hatred variously modified, arise all those other desires and aversions which are promiscuously stiled passions or affections; and are generally thought to be implanted in our nature *originally*, like the power of receiving sensitive pleasure or pain. And when placed on inanimate objects, are these following

lowing; hope, fear, despair and its opposite, for which we want a name.

SECT. IV.

Approbation and Affection considered with regard to Merit, or the Law of Esteem.

IF a man in the pursuit of pleasure or happiness (by which is meant the sum total of pleasure) had to do only with inanimate creatures, his approbation and affections would be as described in the foregoing section. But, since he is dependent with respect to his happiness, not only on these, but also on all rational agents, creatures like himself, which have the power of governing or directing good and evil, and of acting for an end; there will arise different means of happiness, and consequently different pursuits, though tending to the same end, happiness; and therefore different approbations and affections, and the contrary; which deserve particularly to be considered.

That there will arise different means of happiness, is evident from hence, *viz.* that rational agents, in being subservient to our happiness, are not passive, but voluntary. And therefore since we are in pursuit of that, to obtain which we apprehend the concurrence of their wills necessary, we cannot but approve of whatever is apt to procure this concurrence. And that can be only the pleasure or pain expected from it by them. And therefore as I perceive that my happiness is dependent on others, I cannot but judge whatever I apprehend to be proper to excite them to endeavour to promote my happiness, to be a means of happiness, *i. e.* I cannot but *approve* it. And since the annexing pleasure to their endeavours to promote my happiness is the only thing in my power to this end, I cannot but approve of the annexing pleasure to such actions of theirs as are undertaken upon my account. Hence to approve of a rational agent as a
means

means of happiness, is different from the approbation of any other means; because it implies an approbation also of an endeavour to promote the happiness of that agent, in order to excite him and others to the same concern for my happiness for the future.

And because what we approve of we also desire (as has been shewn above) hence also we *desire* the happiness of any agent that has done us good. And therefore *love* or *hatred*, when placed on a rational object, has this difference from the love and hatred of other things, that it implies a desire of, and consequently a pleasure in the happiness of the object beloved; or if hated, the contrary.

The foundation of this approbation and love (which, as we have seen, consists in his voluntary contributing to our happiness) is called the *merit* of the agent for contributing, *i. e.* that whereby he is entitled (upon supposition that we act like rational, sociable creatures; like creatures, whose happiness is dependent on each other's behaviour) to our approbation and love: *demerit* the contrary.

And this affection or quality of any action which we call *merit*, is very consistent with a man's acting *ultimately* for his own private happiness. For any particular action that is undertaken *for the sake of another*, is *meritorious*, *i. e.* deserves esteem, favour, and approbation from him for whose sake it was undertaken, towards the doer of it. Since the presumption of such esteem, &c. was the only motive to that action; and if such esteem, &c. does not follow, or is presumed not to follow it, such a person is reckoned unworthy of any favour, because he shews by his actions that he is incapable of being *obliged* by favours.

The mistake which some have run into, *viz.* that merit is inconsistent with acting upon *private happiness*, as an ultimate end, seems to have arisen from hence, *viz.* that they have not carefully enough distinguished between an inferior, and ultimate end; the end of a particular action, and the end of action in general: which may be explained thus. Though happiness, private happiness,

happiness, is the proper or ultimate end of all our actions whatever, yet that particular means of happiness which any particular action is chiefly adapted to procure, or the thing chiefly aimed at by that action; the thing which, if possessed, we would not undertake that action, may, and generally is called the *end* of that action. As therefore happiness is the general end of all actions, so each particular action may be said to have its proper and peculiar end: thus the end of a beau is to please by his dress; the end of study, knowledge. But neither pleasing by dress, nor knowledge, are ultimate ends, they still tend or ought to tend to something farther; as is evident from hence, *viz.* that a man may ask and expect a reason why either of them are pursued: now to ask the *reason* of any action or pursuit, is only to enquire into the *end* of it: but to expect a reason, *i. e.* and end, to be assigned for an *ultimate* end, is absurd. To ask why I pursue happiness, will admit of no other answer than an explanation of the terms.

Why *inferior ends*, which in reality are only means, are too often looked upon and acquiesced in as *ultimate*, shall be accounted for hereafter:

Whenever therefore the *particular* end of any action is the happiness of another (though the agent designed thereby to procure to himself esteem and favour, and looked upon that esteem and favour as a means of private happiness) that action is meritorious. And the same may be said, though we design to please God, by endeavouring to promote the happiness of others. But when an agent has a view in any particular action distinct from my happiness, and that view is his only *motive* to that action, though that action promote my happiness to never so great a degree, yet that agent acquires no *merit*, *i. e.* he is not thereby entitled to any favour or esteem: because favour and esteem are due from me for any action, no farther than that action was undertaken upon my account. If therefore my happiness is only the pretended end of that action, I am imposed on if I believe it real, and thereby think my-
self

self indebted to the agent ; and I am discharged from any obligation as soon as I find out the cheat.

But it is far otherwise when my happiness is the sole end of that particular action, *i. e.* (as I have explained myself above) when the agent endeavours to promote my happiness as a means to procure my favour, *i. e.* to make me subservient to his happiness as his ultimate end: though I know he aims at my happiness only as a means of his own, yet this lessens not the obligation.

There is one thing, I confess, which makes a great alteration in this case, and that is, whether he aims at my favour *in general*, or only for some particular end. Because, if he aim at my happiness only to serve himself in some particular thing, the value of my favour will perhaps end with his obtaining that particular thing : and therefore I am under less obligation (*ceteris paribus*) the more *particular* his expectations from me are ; but under obligation I am.

Now from the various combinations of this which we call merit, and its contrary, arise all those various approbations and aversions ; all those likings and dislikings which we call *moral*.

As therefore from considering those beings which are the *involuntary* means of our happiness or misery, there were produced in us the passions or affections of love, hatred, hope, fear, despair and its contrary : so from considering those beings which *voluntarily* contribute to our happiness or misery, there arise the following. Love and hatred, (which are different from that love or hatred placed on involuntary beings ; that placed on involuntary beings being only a desire to possess or avoid the thing beloved or hated ; but this on voluntary agents being a desire to give pleasure or pain to the agent beloved or hated) gratitude, anger, (sometimes called by one name, resentment) generosity, ambition, honour, shame, envy, benevolence: and if there be any other, they are only, as these are, different modifications of love and hatred.

Love

Love and hatred, and the foundation of them (*viz.* the agent beloved or hated being apprehended to be instrumental to our happiness) I have explained above. *Gratitude* is that desire of promoting the happiness of another upon account of some former kindness received. *Anger*, that desire of thwarting the happiness of another, on account of some former diskindness or injury received. Both these take place, though we hope for, or fear nothing farther from the objects of either of them, and this is still consistent with acting upon a principle of *private happiness*.

For though we neither hope for, nor fear any thing farther from these particular beings; yet the disposition shewn upon these occasions is apprehended to influence the behaviour of other beings towards us; *i. e.* other beings will be moved to promote our happiness or otherwise, as they observe how we resent favours or injuries.

Ambition is a desire of being esteemed. Hence a desire of being *thought* an object of esteem; hence of *being* an object of esteem; hence of doing *laudable*, *i. e.* useful actions. *Generosity* and *benevolence* are species of it. Ambition in too great a degree is called *pride*, of which there are several species. The title to the esteem of others, which ariseth from any meritorious action, is called *honour*. The pleasure arising from honour being paid to us, *i. e.* from others acknowledging that we are entitled to their esteem, is with out a name. *Modesty* is the fear of losing esteem. The uneasiness or passion which ariseth from a sense that we have lost it, is called *shame*. So that *ambition*, and all those other passions and affections belonging to it, together with *shame*, arise from the esteem of others; which is the reason why this tribe of affections operate more strongly on us than any other, *viz.* because we perceive that as our happiness is chiefly dependent on the behaviour of others, so we perceive also that this behaviour is dependent on the esteem which others have conceived of us; and consequently that our acquiring or losing esteem, is in effect acquiring or losing happiness, and in the highest degree. And the same may be said concerning all our other affections and passions, to enumerate which, what

for want of names to them, and what by the confusion of language about them, is almost impossible.

Envy will be accounted for hereafter, for a reason which will then be obvious.

Thus having explained what I mean by *obligation* and *approbation*; and shewn that they are founded on and terminate in *happiness*: having also pointed out the difference between our approbations and affections as placed on involuntary and voluntary means of happiness; and farther proved that these approbations and affections are not innate or implanted in us by way of *instinct*, but are all *acquired*, being fairly deducible from supposing only sensible and rational creatures dependent on each other for their happiness, as explained above: I shall in the next place endeavour to answer a grand objection to what has here been said concerning approbations and affections arising from a prospect of private happiness.

The objection is this.

The reason or end of every action is always known to the agent; for nothing can move a man but what is perceived; but the generality of mankind love and hate, approve and disapprove, immediately, as soon as any moral character either occurs in life, or is proposed to them, without considering whether their private happiness is affected with it or not; or if they do consider any moral character in relation to their own happiness, and find themselves, as to their private happiness, unconcerned in it; or even find their private happiness lessened by it in some particular instance, yet they still approve the moral character, and love the agent: nay they cannot do otherwise. Whatever reason may be assigned by speculative men why we should be grateful to a benefactor, or pity the distressed; yet if the grateful or compassionate mind never thought of that reason, it is no reason to him. The enquiry is not why he *ought to be* grateful, but why he *is* so. These after-reasons therefore rather shew the wisdom and providence of our Maker, in implanting the immediate powers of these approbations (*i. e.* in Mr. *Hutcheson's* language, a *moral*

moral sense) and these public affections in us, than give any satisfactory account of their origin. And therefore these public affections, and this moral sense, are quite independent on private happiness, and in reality act upon us as mere instincts.

Answer,

The matter of fact contained in this argument, in my opinion, is not to be contested; and therefore it remains either that we make the matter of fact consistent with what we have before laid down, or give up the cause.

Now, in order to shew this consistency, I beg leave to observe, that as in the pursuit of truth we do not always trace every proposition whose truth we are examining, to a first principle or axiom, but acquiesce, as soon as we perceive it deducible from some known or presumed truth; so in our conduct we do not always travel to the ultimate end of our actions, *happiness*: but rest contented, as soon as we perceive any action subservient to a known or presumed *means* of happiness. And these presumed truths and means of happiness whether real or otherwise, always influence us after the same manner as if they were real. The undeniable consequences of mere prejudices are as firmly adhered to as the consequences of real truths or arguments; and what is subservient to a false (but imagined) means of happiness, is as industriously pursued as what is subservient to a true one.

Now every man, both in his pursuit after truth, and in his conduct, has settled and fixed a great many of these in his mind, which he always acts upon, as upon *principles*, without examining. And this is occasioned by the narrowness of our understandings: we can consider but a few things at once; and therefore, to run every thing to the fountain head would be tedious, through a long series of consequences: to avoid this we choose out certain truths and means of happiness, which we look upon as **RESTING PLACES**, in which we may safely acquiesce, in the conduct both of our understanding and practice; in relation to the one, regarding them as *axioms*; in

the other, as *ends*. And we are more easily inclined to this, by imagining that we may safely rely upon what we call *habitual* knowledge, thinking it needless to examine what we are already satisfied in. And hence it is that prejudices, both speculative and practical, are difficult to be rooted out, *viz.* few will examine them.

These RESTING PLACES are so often used as principles, that at last, letting that slip out of our minds which first inclined us to embrace them, we are apt to imagine them, not as they really are, the *substitutes* of principles, but, principles themselves.

And from hence, as some men have imagined *innate ideas*, because they forget how they came by them; so others have set up almost as many distinct *instincts* as there are *acquired principles* of acting. And I cannot but wonder why the *pecuniary* sense, a sense of *power* and *party*, &c. were not mentioned, as well as the *moral*, that of *honour*, *order*, and some others.

The case is really this. We first perceive or imagine some real good, *i. e.* fitness to promote our natural happiness, in those things which we love and approve of. Hence (as was above explained) we annex pleasure to those things. Hence those things and pleasure are so tied together and associated in our minds, that one cannot present itself, but the other will also occur. And the *association* remains even after that which at first gave them the connection is quite forgot, or perhaps does not exist, but the contrary. An instance or two may perhaps make this clear. How many men are there in the world who have as strong a taste for *money* as others have for virtue; who count so much money, so much happiness; nay, even sell their happiness for money; or to speak more properly, make the *having* money, without any design or thought of using it, their ultimate end? But was this propensity to money, born with them? or rather, did not they at first perceive a great many advantages from being possessed of money, and from thence conceive a pleasure in having it, thence desire it, thence endeavour to obtain it, thence receive an actual pleasure in obtaining it, thence desire to preserve the

possession of it? Hence by dropping the intermediate steps between money and happiness, they join money and happiness immediately together, and content themselves with the phantastical pleasure of having it, and make that which was at first pursued only as a *means*, be to them a real *end*, and what their real happiness or misery consists in. Thus the connexion between money and happiness remains in the mind; though it has long since ceased between the things themselves.

The same might be observed concerning the thirst after knowledge, fame, &c. the delight in reading, building, planting, and most of the various exercises and entertainments of life. These were at first entered on with a view to some farther end, but at length become habitual amusements; the idea of pleasure is associated with them, and leads us on still in the same eager pursuit of them, when the first reason is quite vanished, or at least out of our minds. Nay, we find this power of *association* so great as not only to transport our passions and affections beyond their proper bounds, both as to intenseness and duration; as is evident from daily instances of avarice, ambition, love, revenge, &c. but also, that it is able to transfer them to improper objects, and such as are of a quite different nature from those to which our reason had at first directed them. Thus being accustomed to resent an injury done to our body by a retaliation of the like to him that offered it, we are apt to conceive the same kind of resentment, and often express it in the same manner, upon receiving hurt from a stick or a stone; whereby the hatred which we are used to place on voluntary beings, is substituted in the room of that aversion which belongs to involuntary ones. The like may be observed in most of the other passions above-mentioned.

From hence also, *viz.* from the continuance of this *association* of ideas in our minds, we may be enabled to account for that (almost diabolical) passion called *envy*, which we promised to consider.

Mr. *Locke* observes, and I believe very justly, that there are some men entirely unacquainted with this passion. For
most

most men that are used to reflection, may remember the very time when they were first under the dominion of it.

Envy is generally defined to be that pain which arises in the mind from observing the prosperity of others: not of *all* others indefinitely, but only of some particular persons. Now the examining who those particular persons whom we are apt to envy are, will lead us to the true origin of this passion. And if a man will be at the pains to consult his mind, or to look into the world, he'll find that these particular persons are always such as upon some account or other he has had a *rivalship* with. For when two or more are competitors for the same thing, the success of the one must necessarily tend to the detriment of the other, or others: hence the success of my rival and misery or pain are join'd together in my mind; and this connection or association remaining in my mind, even after the rivalship ceases, makes me always affected with pain whenever I hear of his success, though in affairs which have no manner of relation to the rivalship; much more in those that bring that to my remembrance, and put me in mind of what I might have enjoyed had it not been for him.

Thus also we are apt to envy those persons that refuse to be guided by our judgments, and persuaded by us. For this is nothing else than a rivalship about the superiority of judgment; and we take a secret pride, both to let the World see, and in imagining ourselves, that we are in the right.

There is one thing more to be observed in answer to this objection, and that is, that we do not always (and perhaps not for the most part) *make* this association ourselves, but *learn* it from *others*: *i. e.* that we annex pleasure or pain to certain things or actions because we see others do it, and acquire principles of action by imitating those whom we admire, or whose esteem we would procure: Hence the son too often inherits both the vices and the party of his father, as well as his estate: Hence *national* virtues and vices, dispositions and opinions: And from hence we may observe how easy it is to account for what is generally call'd

call'd the *prejudice of education*; how soon we catch the temper and affections of those whom we daily converse with; how almost insensibly we are *taught* to love, admire or hate; to be grateful, generous, compassionate or cruel, &c.

What I say then in answer to the forementioned objection is this: "That though it be necessary in order to, "solve the principal actions of human life to suppose a "moral sense (or what is signified by that name) and also "publick affections; yet I deny that this moral sense, or "these public affections, are innate or *implanted* in us. "They are acquired either from our own *observation* or "the *imitation* of others."

✧ *As the following papers, which were originally printed in a Weekly Miscellany, are upon the same subject with the foregoing Dissertation, and may possibly serve to illustrate it; the Author has thought proper to insert them here, together with some hints relative to the origin of our ideas, which may help to explain Mr. Locke's principles, as well as those of Dr. Hartley, and tend to determine the old controversy about an innate moral sense, which some have lately attempted to revive.*

MORALITY and RELIGION.

THE very notion of a reasonable creature implies, that he propose to himself some *end*, and act in pursuit of it. The only question then can be, What end does Reason direct him to pursue, and by what *means* shall he attain it? Now a *sensible* being, or one that is made capable of sensitive happiness or misery, can reasonably propose to himself no other end than the perfection of this being. *i. e.* The attainment of the one and avoidance of the other. He can have no reason or motive to pursue that which does not at all relate to him; and it is evident that nothing does relate to him, but that which has relation to his happiness. If he be also endowed with *liberty of will*, it is impossible that any thing else should move or sway him; nor can any other obligation be laid upon him without an express contradiction. If therefore right reason can only shew him to be what he is, and direct him to act accordingly, it is plain it can propose to him no other end but *his own happiness*, beyond or beside which he can have no real concern to know, to act, or to be.

Having seen the true end of man consider'd as a sensible, rational, and free being; we will in the next place enquire after the means of attaining this end. Now as man is also *dependent* on other beings for that happiness of which he is made capable, the only means of attaining it must be to recommend himself to the favour of those several beings on whom he does depend, and in degrees proportioned to that dependence. But as he himself and all other beings depend absolutely upon the Deity, who alone has their happiness or misery always in his power, it is plain the favour of God will be the only adequate and effectual means to attain his end, *i. e.* happiness upon the whole: And therefore, whatever tends to procure the divine favour, will be of perpetual obligation, and ought to be the principal aim of all his actions. As all obligation is
founded

founded on the desire of happiness, and all our happiness entirely depends on God, it is evident that his will must be always obligatory, and what alone is able to make any thing else properly so. And though he has framed and disposed the world in such a manner that certain actions will generally recommend us to the favour of those other beings to whom we stand related, and so far may be said to become duties to us, and if universally followed, would bring universal happiness; yet since all *my* reason for pursuing them can only be their fitness to bring happiness to *me*, which in the present state of things they are not always fit and likely to do; the will of God must necessarily intervene, to enforce these duties upon me, and make them universally binding.

As far indeed as certain dispositions and affections will recommend us to the favour and esteem of all those persons with whom we are or may be concerned, and thereby bring more happiness than misery to us, so far we have a good reason or motive to indulge and exercise them; but when, upon what account soever) they have not this effect, but the contrary, or at least have it not in so high a degree as some other dispositions or affections would have (as is very often the case); What principle in nature will oblige us to the exercise of them in such circumstances? nay, what reason can we find to justify us in it, but only our dependence on the Deity, who requires it; and who, we are assured, will either defend and support us here in the exercise of them, or make us ample amends hereafter for what we lose by them?

It is not then any view to the *relations* of things in themselves, and abstractedly consider'd, which obliges us to the practice of that which we call moral virtue; but the will of God which enjoins it, and which alone affords an *eternal and immutable reason* for the practice of it. We are able to conceive no kind of reason or obligation to act, but what is founded on happiness, nor any certain fix'd and permanent happiness, but what is founded on the will of God: 'Tis therefore his will properly and ultimately which we follow in the practice of virtue, and virtue itself only, as it is agreeable to, and an indication of his will, wherein

its worth consists, and from whence it derives its power of obliging.

And therefore to set aside the deity in the consideration of virtue, must be to detach it from its true principle, to take it off its only foundation: and to endeavour to exalt morality into an independency on his will, is to undermine and destroy it. Any other principle but this, will either come short of the mark, or carry us from it.

Thus they who teach that virtue is to be practised for its *native loveliness* and *intrinsic worth*, must either affirm that it is lovely and valuable they know not for what, or why; *i. e.* have no distinct ideas to these fine words; or must mistake the means for the end. Virtue, we find, is lovely for its good effects, and truly valuable on account of the happy consequences that will certainly attend it, either by the laws of nature, or positive appointment: therefore they will call it *lovely in itself*, or *absolutely* so; and tell us it is to be pursued purely *for its own sake*, and exclusively of all the aforesaid consequences; *i. e.* exclusively of every thing that is good and valuable in it.

They who follow virtue for the immediate *pleasure* which attends the exercise of it, must either take it for granted that we have some innate instinct or affection, which at all times infallably directs, and forcibly inclines us to what is right, (all which is as false as fact can make it) or else they practice virtue for a reason which may attend any other practice, and will equally lead them to any, a motive which accompanies every strong persuasion or settled *habit* of mind, whatever may be its future unforeseen consequences. To do what either our judgment has once approved, or we have chose and set our hearts upon, will give us this immediate pleasure in any course of life; especially in one which we can pursue without external disturbance, or which happens to have the vogue of the place, or esteem of our acquaintance, to encourage and confirm us in our pursuit.

They who describe virtue to be *following nature*, go upon a principle near akin to the foregoing, and full as bad: For if our nature, so far as it concerns morals, be in a great measure of our own making, as we have reason

to suppose; if it may be greatly corrupted and perverted, as all allow; this will be a very erroneous, at least an uncertain guide. It will amount to no more than this, do always what you like best; or, follow your present humour.

They who practice virtue for present *convenience, interest, or reputation*, stand upon more solid ground; which nevertheless will often fail them, as we have seen above. The like has been observ'd concerning *reason*, and the *relations of things*.

IN our last, we endeavoured to establish the following conclusions. Private personal happiness, upon the whole, is the ultimate end of man: This absolutely depends on, and can effectually be secured only by the will of God; the will of God therefore is our only adequate rule of action, and what alone includes perpetual obligation.

We shall here endeavour more distinctly to point out the reason and necessity for such a rule, and shew what kind of conformity to it will secure the end proposed. The end of all, we said, was private happiness. Now as we are assured that the Deity had no other design in framing the world at first, nor can have any end in continuing to preserve and govern it, but to lead us all to as much happiness as we become capable of; his will and our happiness are perfectly co-incident, and so may safely enough be substituted one for the other. He proposes only the good of his creatures by being obeyed, and makes it the rule and reason of all that he enjoins; and knows the most effectual methods of attaining it: An absolute implicit compliance with his will may therefore not improperly be called our *end*; nay, ought to be esteemed and acted on as such in all particular cases, As it is an infallible rule and adequate measure of our duty, it must oblige us to an action when we can see no farther reason for it: and it is highly necessary and fit it should. Our knowledge

knowledge of the nature of ourselves, and those about us, is very short and imperfect; we are able to trace our happiness but a few steps through the remote consequences of things, and various reasons of actions; and are frequently apt to deviate from the paths of truth into error and absurdity. We stand in need therefore of some *rule* on which we may constantly depend, which will always guide and direct us in our pursuit; and this as we have seen, can only be the will of that being in whose hands we always are, and who is both able and inclined to reward us to the uttermost.

Our next enquiry then must be, how we shall secure this reward to us, or what will certainly obtain his favour; and that is, in one word, *obedience*; the having a regard to his will in all our actions, and doing them for this reason only, because they are well pleasing to him, and what he requires of us.

That this must be the only means of recommending ourselves to his favour, the only true principle which can make our actions properly virtuous or rewardable by him, is very plain: for nothing can in reason entitle me to a reward from another, which has no manner of relation to him; and nothing can have any relation to the Deity, but what is done *on his account*, in obedience to his command, or with an intent to please him. The *matter* of the act can neither be of advantage nor disadvantage; therefore the *intention* is all that can make it bear any relation to him. In one sense indeed the material part of the act may relate to the Deity, *viz.* As it tends in its own nature to further or oppose the designs of his government: but this will not relate to him in such a manner, as to make the agent a proper subject either of reward or punishment for it. To make one a subject of reward for any particular action, his will must be concerned in it so far as to intend to merit the reward which is annexed to the performance of it, or at least to will and intend the performance of that action as so proposed. To be a proper subject of punishment, a person must intend the breach of some law, or at least the neglect and disregard of it; or the commission of such

such an act as he knows, or might know, if he desired, to be a breach of it. Consequently it is the aim and design of an action only which makes guilt or merit imputable to the agent; and in that aim and design does the guilt or merit of it consist. From hence then we may compute the value or defect of any particular action in a moral or religious account. As far as it is intended to obey the will of God, and advance the ends of his government, in preference of or opposition to any other interest or inclination that presents itself, so far it is meritorious with or acceptable to him: as far as it is done in compliance with any particular interest or inclination, in opposition to, or with a greater regard had to it than to the will of God, or in actual disregard of that will; so far, and in such circumstances it is offensive or injurious to him: as far as it is done without any distinct end, or any distinct consideration of the will of God in that end, so far it is at best purely indifferent, and of no moral or religious account at all. If the end of any particular action terminate in ourselves *immediately*, and we have no farther view in it than the attainment of some temporal advantage, honour, or the like; the action can but be innocent at best; we serve not God herein, but ourselves; and when we attain the natural good effects thereof in this life, we have our reward. Nothing can intitle us to any supernatural and extraordinary recompence from the Deity in another state, but what was done purely on his account; in obedience to his will, or in order to recommend us to his favour. And though we cannot properly *merit* any thing of God, by reason of those innumerable benefits received from him, which we shall never be able to repay; by reason of our manifold transgressions which our good works can never atone for; and because of the many defects attending even the best of them, which render them not so good as they might and ought to be; though for these reasons, I say, we cannot properly *merit* any thing of God, yet nevertheless by *covenant* and *promise* we may be certainly entitled to his favour, so far as we comply with those terms of salvation which he has proposed, and perform

form such duties as he has commanded, purely in *obedience* to him; which is the only principle (as we have seen) that can make any thing rewardable by him.

Not that it is necessary that we should always have this principle explicitly in view, and be able to deduce every particular action immediately from a consideration of the will of God, in order to make it acceptable to him: it may, it is hoped, be sufficient, if we have a general intent of serving him in the whole of any considerable undertaking, and an express regard to him whenever he appears to be more immediately concerned in any part of it. Our imperfect understanding will not allow us to trace up every thing to our ultimate end; we find it necessary therefore to fix several inferior and subordinate ones, wherein we are forced to acquiesce, both in our knowledge and our practice; as is intimated in the preliminary dissertation; and it is sufficient to recommend and justify an action, if it can be fairly deduced from any of these subordinate ends, and have some connection or other with what is manifestly our duty. Nay farther, some actions which are directed to no distinct end at all, though in themselves indeed they be no proper subjects of reward (as was observed) yet they may become such by virtue of certain *habits*, whereof they are natural consequences, and for which habits we are properly accountable: and the reason of this is evident. As we cannot have our main end constantly in view, it is necessary for us to acquire such habits of acting as may lead us almost insensibly to it, and carry us on our journey, even when we are not thinking of it. These habits therefore, if they be rightly founded and directed, must intitle us to a reward for all the several actions which flow from them, even when the first foundation is forgot. Thus a servant sufficiently deserves both the title and reward of being faithful and obedient, if he have acquired such habits of constant diligence in his master's business, as will carry him regularly through it, tho' he seldom consider the end of all his labour, or even think of his master in it.

WE have, in two former papers, considered the true *end* of human actions, and the means of attaining it. We have laid down the only adequate *rule* or criterion of morality, as also removed some of the false and insufficient ones most commonly proposed. We have inquired into the motive, ground, or *principle* on which virtue ought to be pursued, and pointed out the proper method of applying it. To compleat our design upon this subject, we shall now examine the *material* part of virtue, and obviate some mistakes that have arisen, and may still arise on that head.

The most common one is to put the *matter* of any duty for the whole duty. Thus some have defined moral goodness to be nothing more than chusing, willing, or procuring *natural good*, including both private and publick: others make it to consist in producing the greatest degree of *pleasure*, i. e. in the agent himself; or in pursuing *private happiness*: but except these writers intend to treat only of the *material part* of virtue, whenever they describe it in such terms, their descriptions are evidently partial and defective. Moral goodness, or moral virtue in man is not merely chusing or producing pleasure or natural good, but chusing it without view to present rewards, and in prospect of a future recompense only.

The case is the same in acts of the most immediate beneficial tendency, whether they be directed to the public in general, to inferior societies or particular persons: to defend, assist, relieve a friend or fellow-citizen; to serve and support him in his credit or fortunes, body or mind: if this, which commonly goes by the name of moral goodness, proceed from selfish views, or no distinct view at all; from a prospect of future advantage in this life, or from the present pleasure of performing it; it is nothing. To preserve the rights, laws and liberties of our country, to improve and reform a whole nation, to engage in enterprizes that will be of universal benefit to mankind; any or all such actions, though never so good in their effects, and right as to the *matter* of them, yet if they be wanting in point of *principle*; if they are done
for

for profit, honour, or out of mere humour, nay out of the most disinterested benevolence itself; so long as there is no regard had to the Deity in them, they cannot be reckoned strictly virtuous, nor properly claim a place in morals or religion.

Moral goodness therefore is not barely the willing or producing *natural good*, whether private or public. This would be denominating the whole from a part; the fault of all those definitions formerly mentioned. Thus they who describe it to be *following nature*, neither settle the *matter*, nor establish any determinate *rule*; and if they have a *principle*, it is either false or inadequate, as was before observed. They who determine it to be acting according to *reason, truth*, or the *relations of things*, at most lay down only the *rule*, and *matter*; but give us neither any distinct *principle*, nor *end*. They who define it to be *obedience to the will of God* only, leave out the material part; *i. e.* do not shew specifically what the will of God requires, or wherein it consists: neither do they sufficiently inform us *why* we ought to obey it, or direct us to what we call our ultimate *end*. A complete definition of virtue, or morality, should take in all these particulars, and can be only this: *the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness.*

Nature and Obligations of M A N,

As a sensible and rational BEING.

1. **A**LL our primary, simple ideas proceed from sensation, external or internal; the latter of which may be extended through most parts of the vessels of the human body, and is extremely complicated; it may form a kind of common *sensorium*, and be the seat of several *associations* propagated from the brain down through the stomach and bowels, and spread over the whole nervous system; and will be found perhaps upon examination to produce much greater and more various effects than we are commonly aware of. From the one or the other of these sources we receive continual impressions while we are awake; nay frequently feel the influence of them, or their connection with the then state of the body, in our intervals of dreaming or imperfect sleep: and from the united force of such impressions, may arise a new species of sensation, or an idea different from any thing that appeared in any one of the individuals. *v. Hartley, v. 1. p. 75.* Thus various liquors, meats, and medicines pervading our whole frame, and like an electrical power producing a general agitation, or composure in it, raise as general a kind of rapturous gaiety, or tranquil delight, which bears so near a resemblance to some intellectual operation, that it is often mistaken for such; but in reality is as distinct from the mere *taste* of all such liquors, &c. taken separately, as any objects of the sense and intellect are from each other.

2. By our faculties of repeating and enlarging, of comparing, and compounding, or abstracting these and their several objects, we raise a secondary set of ideas, still more mixt and diversified, but yet of the same general nature; which often go under the name of *intellectual*, from the intellects being more evidently employed about them; but

all grow out of the old stock, *i. e.* are originally formed from sense and wholly grounded in it: as may in part appear from the words we use in describing them, *v. g.* to *apprehend, comprehend, conceive, &c.* which are (as Mr. Locke observes) words manifestly taken from the operation of sensible things, and applied to certain modes of thinking. B. 3. C. 1. §. 5. Comp. Hartley v. 1. c. 2. §. 2. Prop. 44. p. 166, &c.

3. The contemplation of these very faculties, by which we mold and modify the original materials of our knowledge, produces a third set of ideas, still more remote from the first origin; and therefore termed ideas of *pure* intellect, as more immediately arising from and terminating in the reflex view of these same intellectual and active powers, and of their several operations: *v. g.* considering what it is to compare, compound, &c. and what these and the like powers extend to and infer. Whence we form all the notion we have of a *spirit*.

4. Man is a compound of corporeal organs, (most of them conveying sensitive impressions, as observed above) and the distinct powers of *perception* (in the last sense of that word which ought to be carefully distinguished from the other, to which it is posterior in the order of nature) or *thinking* in general, and voluntary *action* in close union with these.

5. We may observe likewise that these latter, which are generally stiled active powers, are not always in exercise, any more than some of the passive, sensitive ones are; their exercise being manifestly suspended during some bodily disorders, and altogether ceasing in what is called *sound* sleep. Whence it appears that thought and voluntary action cannot in strictness be essential, or immutably necessary to any one part of our constitution; but rather is connected with and dependent on a certain disposition of the whole frame, or a regular state of the chief vital branches of it:

6. Some

6. Some of these ideas of sense are in certain respects agreeable to us; others the contrary; the former being, in all probability, such as tend to the preservation of each individual, the latter to its destruction.

7. A foresight of them likewise, or of their several causes, has the same effect in some degree both upon mind and body; nay sometimes may be so formed as to produce it in a higher degree than the objects themselves would, were they present. Thus may the imagination crowd the pleasures or pains of a day, a year, an age, into one moment, and thereby make the impressions of these two last classes far more general and extensive, as well as more intense and exquisite, than any of the particular sensitive ones of which they are composed.

8. And as a prospect of these and their causes is productive of the same kind of pleasure or pain that attends the presence of each, so the pursuit of the former and endeavour to avoid the latter becomes also agreeable, and all that as sensible and rational beings we can be concerned about; since the sum total, or the aggregate of these same pleasures or pains, is our supreme happiness or misery; the attainment of the one, and security from the other, our most perfect state: the necessary means of attaining to which end compose our natural good, and in the regular intended pursuit of it consists our moral goodness.

9. Now as most of these means of happiness lie in the power of others, who being of the same nature with ourselves, can only be induced to contribute to it, or to cooperate with us in procuring it, by a settled disposition in us of doing the like to them on all occasions; without which it will be impossible to prevent our frequently betraying some particular selfish and indirect views: hence the contracting of such disposition, and the regard to their good in the general course of our actions becomes necessary to our own; in the designed prosecution of which lies the formal, and in the actual production of it the material

part of virtue; both which in common acceptation constitute the whole of our *merit* with respect to each other.

10. Not that the promoting of another's happiness is ever of itself immediately, or by any kind of natural or innate principle, or affection, productive of our own: as well might one feel by another's senses, or be made happy by his feelings, without any real participation of them; as well might we suppose a man to act entirely on another's motives, as judge any thing good, right and fit for him to do, or to communicate to another, merely because that thing is good and fit for the other to receive, or pleasant to be enjoyed by him; except that same enjoyment is in some measure relative to his own proper rule or end, or can be made right and reasonable for him to pursue it, by some such medium as connects it with his natural principle, that constant and invariable ground of action, *i. e.* his own happiness.

11. Nor is it difficult to find or form such a connection from what was hinted above; *reason* discovers it, as well from the natural consequence of things (benevolent affections in each person being apt to generate correspondent ones in others, and each beneficent act to engage a return of like good offices) as from the positive appointment of the deity, who designs the common happiness or perfection of all rational beings, according to the nature he has given them, and the circumstances under which he has placed them; having made them with no other view that we can conceive, than in order to have this happiness communicated to them in the most effectual manner, and who must consequently approve of every instance of their co-operation with him in the same design, and assuredly reward each regular course of action in his creatures, that intentionally tends to promote it.

12. His *will* in this respect is therefore the general *rule* or true *criterion* of morality, as what infallibly must, and what alone can, effectually secure to us our ultimate end, happiness upon the whole; happiness in some certain
state,

state, or situation above and beside the visible consequence of all our virtuous acts and habits ; and who will in that state make us most ample amends for whatever pains we take here, or whatever loss and inconvenience we can possibly undergo in prosecuting of them ; and thereby makes such prosecution an invariable duty to us, or constitutes a perfect and perpetual *obligation* thereto.

13. The same thing may be either traced out thus and demonstrated, by reason, or come at in a more compendious way, which yet will have equally strong and permanent effects upon our constitution, nay commonly more sudden and more striking ones ; on which account it is often mistaken for self-evidence or intuition :—I mean the power of ASSOCIATION, which was just hinted at by Mr. *Locke*, but apply'd to the present purpose more directly by the Author of the *Preliminary Dissertation*, and from him taken up and considered in a much more general way by Dr. *Hartley*, who has from thence solved many of the principal appearances in human nature, the sensitive part of which, since Mr. *Locke*'s Essay, had been very little cultivated, and is perhaps yet to the generality a *terra incognita* ; how interesting soever, as well as entertaining, such enquiries must be found to be : on which account it is much to be lamented that no more thoughtful persons are induced to turn their minds this way ; since to very noble a foundation for improvements has been laid by both these excellent writers, especially the last : whose work is, I beg leave to say, in the main, notwithstanding all its abstruseness, well worth studying ; as it opens an untrod path to many useful parts of science, and would have been sufficiently clear and convincing, had he but confined his observations to the plain *facts*, and experiments, on which it was first founded, without ever entering minutely into the *physical cause* of such phenomena ; as the great *Newton* wisely did in the point of *gravitation*, throwing his whole theory of that same *Aether* and its vibrations, into some modest *queries* : notwithstanding his very probable supposition that both
gravitation

gravitation in the greater orbs, and all sensation and muscular motion in all animal bodies, might depend upon it.

14. Nor will perhaps this principle of *association* appear of less extent and influence in the intellectual world, than that of gravity is found to be in the natural. It is already discovered to be an universal *law of our nature*, intimately connected with the mutual operations of the mind and body, notwithstanding the odd whimsical appearance it first made in Mr. *Locke's* essay, (though he applied it to better purposes in his *Conduſt of the Underſtanding*, § 40.) and its being so often slighted as a *vague, confused* principle by later writers; particularly *Hutcheson. System of Moral Philosophy*, p. 55, &c. And though we may possibly never comprehend the cause that actuates it, or the instrument by which it is exerted (any more than we can hope to see the bond of union between mind and body; though this, by the bye, may seem a fair step towards it) yet 'tis enough for our present purpose if the principle itself has been so far explained by the worthy Author abovementioned, as thence to demonstrate that the moral sense may be wholly generated from sensitive pleasures, and supported by them: which I apprehend to be done effectually. See his *Observations on Man*, v. 2. p. 471, &c.

15. If the forementioned account of our acquiring this *moral sense* be admitted, it is shewn in reality to be no more than a *habit*, which is never of itself a sure and sufficient rule, but evidently wants some other regulation; and like all other habits should be grounded on some solid principles of reason, and ever subject to them.

16. But whether this account be admitted or not, Mr. *Locke* has plainly proved that it must be acquired some how or other, since there are no kind of *practical principles* innate, or so much as *self-evident*; nor can our knowledge of any moral propositions be *intuitive*; since it requires *discourse and reasoning to discover the certainty of their truth*. B. 1. C. 3. § 1. which plainly depends upon some other truth antecedent to them, and from which they must be deduced. *ibid.*
and

and men may very justly demand a reason for every one of them, *ib.* § 4. which reason lies in another province, and must be fetched from the *natural relations* of the things and persons that surround us, *i. e.* from *señitive* pleasure and pain, on which hinge all our passions turn, and from whence must be derived the great rule of our actions, *ib.* § 3. 6. &c. and B. 2. C. 20.

17. The same judicious writer (Mr. *Locke*) has accounted for that *variety* of *moral rules* visible amongst men, from *sb: different sorts of happiness they have a prospect of*, § 6. as also from their *education, company and the customs of their country*, § 8. any of which serves to set *conscience* on work, and thereby tends to diversify their moral rule; which if it were innate, or (what comes to the same thing) any properly natural sense or instinct, must one would think be uniform and invariable: but whether any such be found among our species is after all a *matter of fact* determinable only by those who are well conversant in the early education of children, and duly qualified to make just observations on their original frame, and native dispositions. If this had been more carefully attended to, with what the same able writer has delivered concerning the true history of the human mind, I fancy a right theory of morals might long ago have been laid down with more success; and in particular we should have been satisfied, that any such principle as will perpetually influence and effectually induce us to promote the happiness of others absolutely and entirely independent of our own, can never be wrought out of our original feelings; or spring from that primary and purely native stock of our ideas, on which are grounded all the tribe of natural appetites, and the whole furniture of the human mind. It must therefore either be superinduced by reason, in view of attaining our great end, as observed above; or come in under the head of *association*, and by way of *habit*, without any ultimate end or distinct view at all. Those of the other side of the question may chuse which of these two they like best.

lxii. *The Nature and Obligations of Man &c.*

18. From the whole it will appear, that there is properly but *one original source* of our ideas, i. e. *sensation*; nor any *original* pleasures or pains beside sensitive ones, however variously these may be combined, abstracted or enlarged: and therefore any innate intellectual determination, or moral principle wholly underived from and naturally independent of these, seems an *impossibility*. The intellect perceives only what is in things, and if there be nothing in the mind originally beside these same sensitive pleasures or pains, then can it constitute no other class fundamentally different from these, and much less directly opposite to them, whatever alterations or improvements may be made amongst them: and the *medicina mentis* will, like that of the *body*, be all composed of the same sort of ingredients, however mixed and altered in the composition.

If Mr. *Locke's* plan were once rightly understood, we should have little room for any dispute about the different natures of these two components of our constitution, or the distinct principles that actuate and govern them. We should soon find that all sound philosophy in *morals* is entirely built on *natural* philosophy, and never to be separated from it. But we seem not yet to have followed this great Author up to his first principles, or duly traced the consequences of his system, notwithstanding his having been so long and justly admired amongst us; and most of the inveterate prejudices that used to attend his consultation of the old idle doctrine of *innate ideas* and *instincts* be now well nigh worn out. Though perhaps even yet there may be left enow to prevent an impartial examination of his scheme; the aim and tendency whereof is no other than to reduce the foundations of our knowledge, and our happiness, to that original *simplcity* which nature seems to have observed in all her works,

Concerning the Origin of Evil.

CHAP. I.

Containing some Principles previously necessary to the Understanding and Solution of the difficulty about the Origin of Evil.

SECT. I.

Of the Knowledge of External Objects.

I. IT is allowed that external objects are made known to us from without by the senses; but we have entirely forgot how *light, colours,* and other external things at first affected our senses and entered the mind; nor can we easily recollect the rise and progress of our knowledge concerning these things.

That sensations represent external things to us, or at least discover the presence of them.

However it is agreed that the *conceptions* which we have of these either represent to us the things themselves, or at least discover the *presence* or *operations* of them: That the sensation of *light*, for instance, arises from its being present to the eye; and so in all other objects of the senses.

II. But it is to be observed that the representations of things which we have from the senses, are by no means simple, but very much confused and complicated; for example, the eye represents to the mind *burning wax*, i. e. a thing that is hard, round, capable of being melted in the fire, red, and when softened by heat change-

That these are confused and complicated, but afterwards separated by the understanding.

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ing; an in-
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burning
wax.

able into any figure, susceptible also of various colours; and lastly, resolvable into *smoke*. The eye exhibits all these properties in the burning wax almost at one glance, but the *understanding* separates those things by reflection, which the sight had conveyed to the mind collectively. For it perceives that the wax preserves its essence and denomination, though from round it be turned into square, from hard and red, into soft and black. From whence it appears that all these properties are *extrinsic* to it, but that which continues under all these changes is called its *nature* and *substance*,

The first
distinction
of our
concep-
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qualities
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III. By *substance* I here understand a thing which the mind can conceive by *itself* as *distinct* and *separate* from all others: For that thing, the conception of which does not *depend* upon another, nor include or suppose any other, is to us a *substance*; and accordingly we distinguish it by that name; but that which implies *dependence* in its conception we call a *mode*, or *accident*. For instance, we can conceive a certain portion of *matter*, such as wax, setting aside all others, and also without any particular *figure*: But we are not in like manner able to conceive any particular figure without matter. Wax therefore is a *substance*, for our conceptions represent it as *distinct*, *divided* from, and *independent* of all other things: Nor is it necessary to the knowledge thereof that we join the conceptions of other things when we think of it: for the conceptions of that and these *contribute* nothing to, nor stand in need of each other in order to their being understood. But *colour*, *figure*, *softness* and *hardness* are *modes* or *accidents*, since they cannot be conceived without something that is *coloured*, *figured*, *soft*, or *hard*; but they enter not into the *substance* or *nature* of wax, for *that* remains, whatever may become of *these*.

IV.

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3

IV. But when this is resolved into *smoke*, or *flame*, it has no longer the name of wax given to it. We call the thing *wax* which is applicable to a certain peculiar use; but when it is once resolved into smoke or flame, it becomes unfit for that use to which wax is subservient; and therefore changes its *essence* and *appellation*. What then does it carry along with it under all mutations? It is always *extended*, and capable of *motion* or *rest*; and has always parts which are *separable* and *exclude* one another out of the same place; the substance therefore which is attended with these qualities or properties we call *matter*. (1.)

How we know that there is any such thing as *matter*.

V.

NOTES.

(1.) Our Author's notion of *substance*, as including all the constituent properties of any thing, seems to be more plain and agreeable to nature, and therefore of greater use in philosophy than that which is commonly received. We find by experience that a thing will always exhibit the same appearances in some respects, though it admit of change in others: or in Mr. *Locke's* language, that certain numbers of simple ideas go constantly together, whereas some others do not: the former of these we call the *substance*, thing, or being itself, the latter are termed its modes or accidents. Thus the substance of *body*, as far as we know of it, consists in solidity and extension: which being necessarily finite, it also becomes capable of division, figure and motion. These are its original, inseparable qualities, which constitute the thing, and seem not to depend on any thing else as a *subject*. But a particular figure, motion, &c. are only accidents or modes of its existence, which do not necessarily attend it, though they themselves cannot be supposed to exist without it. The substance of *spirit* consists in the powers of thinking and acting, which likewise admit of various modifications. This seems to be all that we can learn concerning the nature of things from observation and experience. To enquire into the *manner* how these, which we call properties, exist together, or to attempt to explain the *cause*, ground, or reason of their union, is in vain; to assign the word *substance* for a representation of it, is saying nothing; it is setting a mere word for what we have neither any idea of, nor occasion for. Indeed if we consider these primary qualities as needing something to inhere in, we are obliged to seek for something to support them; and by the same way of reasoning we may seek for something else to support that other something, and so on; and at last shall find no other support for the whole but the cause which produced it. Mr. *Locke*, though he gave into this way of talking, as he was only laying down the history of men's conceptions on the subject, yet he has sufficiently shown

What it is. V. What is observable in wax, may also be observed in any other substance, which we know by

NOTES.

shewn his dislike of it, in *B. 1. C. 4. §. 18. B. 2. C. 13. §. 18, 19, 20. and C. 23. §. 23. and elsewhere**. *Dr. Watts* is of opinion, 'that it is introducing a needless *scholastic* notion into the 'real nature of things and then fancying it to have a real existence.' *Logic*, p. 14. The Author of the *Procedure, Extent, &c.* affirms, 'that as far as we directly know the essential properties of any substance, so far we have a direct knowledge of 'the substance itself; and if we had a direct knowledge of all 'the essential properties of any substance, we should have an 'adequate knowledge of that substance; for surely, if there be 'any meaning in words, the knowing any of the essential properties of a thing, is knowing *so much* of its very substance or 'essence;† meaning the same by these two last words, though *Mr. Locke* uses them in a very different signification; the former being only that which makes any thing an *ens* or being; the latter that which makes it a being of this or that *sort*: of which below.

In short, whatever is understood by this word *substance*; it cannot, as *Mr. Locke* observes,† be applied to God, spirits, and body, in the same sense; and therefore the application of this and the like doubtful terms to subjects of a very different nature (especially that of *substratum*, which more apparently confines our thoughts to body) must needs occasion error and confusion.

But though our author's notion of substance be very defensible, he has applied the word *matter* to the idea of *body*, whereof matter is only a partial conception, containing nothing more than the idea of a solid substance, which is every where the same. These two terms therefore cannot be put one for the other, as *Mr. Locke* observes, though indeed they are often used promiscuously.

Upon this occasion it may not be improper to observe, that the various significations of these general terms, *matter, substance, essence, &c.* will serve to convince us, in the first place, that these words do not denote the manner how things really exist, but only our manner of conceiving them; and secondly, that there are no real existences strictly conformable to this our manner of conceiving them, *i. e.* in *generals*. For if either these general terms stood for things really existing under such a precision, or this our way of conceiving things were fixed by nature, neither of them would be so various and uncertain as we find they are. The end of making these *general conceptions* is to range things into *sorts* for the convenience of language. The manner of acquiring them is as follows.

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* *Comp. Collier's enquiry into the existence and nature of God*, p. 227. 228. and *Sherlock's Vindic. of the Trin.* p. 69, &c. and *Watts's philosophical Essays*, Ess. 2. † *B. I. C. iii. p. 30. 31. † B. II. C. xiii. § 18. B. III. C. 2. § 15.*

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by the *senses*. For all things that are perceived by the senses admit of the like changes, and the above-

NOTES.

We are at first only acquainted with particular substances; but observing that as these particular substances differ in some respects, so they agree in others, *i. e.* though this particular substance excites in the mind some simple idea or ideas, which another does not, yet there are some ideas excited equally from both; we take no notice of those ideas in which two or more particular substances differ, but select those only in which they agree, and connect them into one complex idea by giving them one name. Which complex idea becomes general, *i. e.* it may be affirmed of, or belongs to, or is found in more than one particular substance; and the several substances of which it is affirmed, &c. are said to be contained under that general idea. General ideas of substances therefore are not made by *adding* all or any of the particular ideas found in each substance, or by that refined method, which the Author of the *Procedure* imagines, of adding and omitting them at the same time; but only by *leaving out* all those ideas in which two or more particular substances differ, and retaining those in which they agree. And from general ideas thus made we proceed to more general ones in the same way, *viz.* by always dropping the particulars wherein they differ. Thus observing a certain agreement among individuals, and omitting the rest, we form an idea of the several *species*. In like manner, leaving out the distinguishing marks of each species, we get an idea of the *genus*, such as *man, beast*, or of a higher genus, such as *animal*: and again by dropping that by which animals are distinguished from all other things, we acquire the still more general idea of *being* or *substance*. When any one of these general ideas is found in a particular thing, it is called the *essence* of that thing: *Essence* therefore is only that general abstract idea in the mind by which we determine any thing to be of this or that *sort*, which sort we signify by such a general name, as *animal*, or *matter*. So that the same quality may be essential or not essential to any thing according as that thing is ranked under a different *sort*.

In the same way that we make general ideas of substances we also consider single *properties, modes* and *relations*, *viz.* by separating them from all other properties, &c. with which they are found in Nature, or from all particular subjects in which they inhere, and leaving only so much as remains in common, and includes, or may be affirmed of every property, &c. of that kind: Thus observing that all bodies agree in being *extended*, as well as solid, though they differ never so much in magnitude and figure, we take the former of these properties apart from the latter, as also from any particular magnitude or shape, and call it, *extension* in the abstract; which being thus made general, it will comprehend all particular extensions, and may be enlarged every way and amplified in *infinitum*: we can conceive it as existing beyond the limits of body, and by adding the confused idea of a *substra-*

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* See Locke B. III. C. vi. §. 4, 5, &c.

abovementioned properties continue both *under*, and *after* all these motions and mutations. Any
 fen-

NOTES.

dur to it, it will become independent, and serve both as a common *measure* and a common *receptacle* for all bodies, which probably constitutes our idea of *space*. See *notes* 3 and 9. In the same manner we form an universal *mode*, *v. g.* Observing a train of ideas succeeding one another in our minds at certain distances, and being conscious that we ourselves exist while we receive them; or that our existence is commensurate to this succession, we get the idea of *continuing*. Observing also that several other things *continue* as well as ourselves, we find that the same affection belongs to them; but it being an endless work to form as many distinct ideas of this kind as there are things that thus continue; we abstract from particular existences and make one general idea of *continuance*, which serves for all; and this is *duration*.

The parts or periods of this common duration we call *time*; and every thing which is commensurate to them is measured by it, and said to exist in it, after the same manner as was observed before of *space*.

Mixed modes and relations are combinations of ideas of different kinds voluntarily put together and connected by their names. Such as *goodness*, *gratitude*; *identity*, *necessity*, &c. These are apparently the work of the mind, and though many of them have a real foundation in Nature, and may be found by observation in the concrete, yet they are generally got before from information or invention, abstracted from particular subjects, and lodged in the mind with general names annexed to them, according as the circumstances of persons and conveniencies of life require. See *Locke*, B. III. C. iii.

I have been the longer on this subject of *abstract ideas*, since notwithstanding what Mr. *Locke* has hinted, the nature of them seems to be but little understood, otherwise we should never hear of our ideas of *infinity*, of *space*, *duration*, &c. requiring an external *ideatum* or *objective* reality;—of their being real attributes and necessarily interring the existence of some immense and eternal being;—whereas all universals, or abstract ideas, such as these evidently are, (See Dr. *Clarke*'s answer to the 4th letter) exist under that *formality* no where but in the mind, neither have they any other foundation, nor can they be a proof of any thing, beside that power which the mind has to form them.

If the nature of *mixed modes and relations* were sufficiently attended to, I believe it would not be asserted that our ideas of perfect goodness, wisdom, power, &c. are all inadequate and only negative; that all our knowledge of these perfections is improper, indirect, and only *analogical*, and that the whole kind, nature, essence and idea of them is entirely different when applied to God, from what it is when predicated of his creatures. Whereas these being arbitrary combinations of ideas made without regard to any particular subject in which they may inhere, they are evidently their own archetypes, and therefore cannot but be *adequate* and *positive*: they are what they are immutably and universally; their *natures* and *essences* must be the same wherever they

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sensible object, however changed, is always *extended, moveable, consisting of solid, distinct and divisible parts.*

VI. Not that this is a definition, or *idea* (2.) of *matter*, any more than the former was of *substance*, but that hereby we are acquainted with its presence,

That this definition does not reach the

NOTES.

they are found, or to whatsoever subject we apply them, so long as the same number of ideas are included under the same word; and nothing more is requisite than that the ideas thus put together be consistent to make all our knowledge concerning them, *real, proper, direct, adequate and universal.* See *Locke*, B. IV. C. iv. §. 5, 6, &c.

I shall trouble the reader no farther on this head than only to observe, that the method of forming general ideas (which our author had advanced in his first note, and which has been since used by another eminent writer *) by making the idea of one individual stand for the whole species; must be wrong on this very account, *viz.* that according to it *universals*, such as *animal* or *matter* would have a real existence in the same precise manner in which we consider them; whereas under such precisions they are confessedly the creatures of our own minds, and exist no where else. We have nothing at all to do therefore with *analogy* in forming *abstract ideas*, we can never come at them by substituting one particular for the rest; but on the contrary must conceive them by *removing* all particulars of existence and leaving only what remains in common, as explained above. See *Locke*, B. III. C. iii. §. 7, 8, 9. or *Watts's* logic, Part I. C. iii. §. 3. or the words *abstraction* and *general* in *Chambers's* dictionary.

(2.) Our author confines this word *idea* to the sense in which it was first used by *Plato*, *viz.* as an image or representation of the supposed *essence* of things; in which sense it was attributed peculiarly to God, who was said to perceive things immediately by their *essences*, whereas we only know them by certain *marks* or *characters*, or by *analogy*.

He had endeavoured to explain this in his note upon the place, which is omitted as we apprehend the term to be much better explained and more conveniently applied by *Mr. Locke*, who makes the word *idea* stand for every thing about which the mind is conversant, or which can be the object of perception, thought or understanding; in which large sense we have an idea of *matter* or body, of *substance*, and *space*; nor can we dispute the reality of such ideas or of their causes, or cease to be surpris'd at these readers, who were so far from understanding *Mr. Locke*, as to suppose that an inquisitive attention to his writings, and those of *Malebranch*, could possibly give birth to *Bishop Berkeley's* disbelief, of the real existence of matter or an external world; since the former (*Locke*) has so very effectually established, the reality of our sensitive knowledge. V. Biogr. Brit. Art. *Berkley* 2d. Ed. p. 249.

* *Dr. Brown*, Bishop of *Corke*, *Procedure*, &c.

Idea of
matter, but
only shews
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mark to
distinguish
it by.

presence, and distinguish it from every other thing; as we know a man by his countenance, and other circumstances: Nor is it necessary that these should be applicable to all *substance*, at all times, and to that alone: For it is enough if for this particular time and occasion we know the particular *substance* we are talking of by them; and sufficiently distinguish it from other things.

How we
come to
the know-
ledge of
space.

VII. It is to be observed farther, that when a part of this matter is removed another succeeds into its place, but is not in the same place consistent with it. *Place* therefore seems to be something beyond, beside and distinct from the *matter* which it receives. For as from hence that wax was successively capable of different forms, figures, colours and changes, it appears that something is in it beside, and different from all these, which we call the *matter* of the wax: so in like manner from hence that the same *place* or *space* receives more and different bodies and particles of matter successively, but cannot admit more than one at the same time, it will appear that *place* or *space*, is as distinct from *matter* or body, as wax is from the colours successively received, and does not depend on them any more than wax does on any particular form.

What it is

VIII. If therefore we set aside, or annihilate *matter*, whatsoever still remains will all belong to the nature of *space*; as in the former case when we had set aside the properties of *wax*, that which belonged to the *matter* or substance of it remained. If you ask what that is? I answer, first *local* mobility is to be set aside, for that seems peculiar to matter. Secondly, an actual *separation* of parts, for what is immoveable cannot be divided. Thirdly, *impenetrability*, or solidity; for that supposes motion, and is necessary to the production of it. It remains therefore that
space

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space (as we conceive it) be something extended immoveable, capable of receiving or containing matter, and penetrable by it. Though therefore we have not a definition or idea of *space*, properly so called; yet we can hereby sufficiently distinguish it from every other thing, and may reason about it as much as we have occasion.

IX. These three conceptions, namely, of sensible qualities (viz. *motion*, &c.) of *matter* and *space*, seem to be the chief of those which we have from without, and so natural to us that there is no reasonable man but perceives them in himself. There are some who deny that *space* is any thing distinct from *matter*, nor is it much to our purpose whether it be or no: Yet we cannot without offering violence to our understandings, deny but that the conception of *space* is distinct from the conception of *matter*, (3.)

These three conceptions, viz. of sensible qualities (v. g. motion, &c.) of *matter* and *space*, seem to be the chief of those that are external.

SECT.

NOTES.

(3.) Though so much noise has been heard about *space*, (which *Leibnitz* justly calls an idol of some modern *Englishmen* :) and so great use made of it in demonstrating the divine attributes, in a way which some stile *a priori*; yet, I am forced to confess that I cannot possibly frame any other notion of it, than either, first, as the mere negation or absence of *matter*, or secondly, as the extension of *body*, considered abstractly or separate from any particular body; or thirdly, as a *subject* or *substratum* of that same general extension, for which last notion see N. 9.

Now according to the first supposition we may indeed have a positive idea of it, as well as of *silence*, *darkness*, and many other privations; as Mr. *Locke* has fully proved that we have and shewn the reason of it, B. III. C. viii. §. 4. But to infer from such an idea of *space*, that *space* itself is something external, and has a real existence, seems to be no better arguing, than that because we have a different idea of *darkness* from that of *light*; of *silence* from that of *sound*; of the absence of any thing, from that of its presence; therefore darkness, &c. must be something positive, and have as real an existence as *light* has: and to deny that we have any positive idea, or, which is the very same, any idea at all, of the privations above-mentioned (for every idea, as it is a perception of the mind, must necessarily be positive, though it arise from what Mr. *Locke* justly calls a privative cause) to deny, I say, that we have these ideas, will be to deny experience and contradict common sense. There are therefore ideas, and simple ones too, which have nothing *ad extra* correspondent to them, no proper ideatum, archetype, or objective reality, and

S E C T. II.

Of the Enquiry after the First Cause.

An enquiry concerning motion, matter, and space: whether they exist of themselves.

I. S Upposing these three, viz. *motion*, *matter*, and *space*, we are in the next place to examine whether they be of themselves, or of something

N O T E S.

I do not see why that of *space* may not be reckoned one of them. To say that *space* must have existence, because it has some *properties*, for instance, *penetrability*, or a *capacity* of receiving body, seems to me the same as to urge that *darkness* must be *something*, because it has the power or property of *receiving light*; *silence* the property of *admitting sound*; and *absence* the property of being supplied by *presence*, i. e. to assign absolute negations, and such as by the same way of reasoning may be applied to *nothing*, and then call them positive properties; and so conclude that the *chimera* thus clothed with them must needs be *something*. Setting aside the names of its other pretended properties (which names also are as merely negative as the supposed properties to which they belong) those that attribute *extension* to space seem not to attend to the true notion of that property, which, as the schoolmen define it (and let them who like not this definition try to give us a better) is to have *partes extra partes*, and as such, i. e. as including *parts* (which parts, as they differ in situation from each other, may have things predicated of some of them different from those which can be predicated of others) appears plainly inconsistent with their own idea of what they call simple, uniform, indivisible space, and is applicable to *body* only. And to attribute extension or parts to space, according to the first notion of it laid down by us, will be the same as to talk of the extension or parts of *absence*, of *privation*, or of *mere nothing*. Lastly, to ask if space under the second notion of that word (i. e. as extension in the abstract) be extended or have parts, is apparently absurd; it is the same with that noted question of the man, who being told that to have riches, was to be rich, asked if riches then themselves were rich.

According to the first supposition then, space will be mere *non entity*, or nothing, i. e. nothing can be affirmed, but every thing denied of it: according to the second, it will be only an *abstract idea* formed in the mind from a property peculiar to matter, which property abstracted in idea cannot itself admit of any other properties, nor be applicable to the *Divine nature*, nor capable of positive *infinity* in any respect. As to the last, 'If *space*, says Dr. Cudworth, be concluded to be nothing else but the *extension and distance of body*, or *matter* considered in *general* (without respect to this or that particular body) and *abstractly* in order to the conception of *motion* and the mensuration of things, then do we say that there appeareth no sufficient grounds for

this

Se^{ct}. 2. *Concerning the Origin of Evil.*

18.

thing else? If they exist of themselves, the enquiry is at an end. For those things that exist by nature are causes of existence to themselves, *i. e.* do

NOTES.

‘ this *positive infinity* of space, we being certain of no more than this, that be the world, or any figurate body, never so great, it is not impossible but that it might still be greater and greater without end. Which *indefinite increasableness* of body and space seems to be mistaken for a *positive infinity* thereof. Where- as for this very reason, because it can never be so great, but that more magnitude may still be added to it, therefore it can never be positively infinite.

‘ To conclude therefore, by space without the finite world, is to be understood nothing but the possibility of body farther and farther without end, yet so as never to reach to infinity.*

Hence appears the weakness of that common argument urged by *Gassendus*, *Dr. Clarke*, and *Raphson*, for the *absolute infinity* of space, viz. From the impossibility of setting bounds or limits to it: since that, say they, would be to suppose space bounded by something which itself occupies space, or else by nothing, both which are contradictions.

Which argument either first of all supposes that space is really some thing, or some positive quality; which wants to be proved. Or else improperly applies bounds and bounders, to mere non-entity, or bare possibility; which has nothing to do with the idea of bounds.

If therefore we take space in the first notion laid down, then its unboundedness will (as *Cudworth* says) signify nothing but the possibility of body farther and farther without end; according to which sense, let us state their usual question in other words, and the great fallacy and impropriety of it will appear. What is there, say they, beyond this space? You must imagine more such space, or nothing. What is there, say we, beyond this possibility of existence? You must either imagine more such possibility of existence, or mere nothing, *i. e.* non existence. What consequence can possibly be drawn from such an odd kind of argumentation?

But if space be taken in the second sense, *i. e.* as extension in abstracto, then the meaning of our not being able to set bounds to it will only be, that we have a power of enlarging our abstract idea in infinitum, or that we always find in ourselves the same ability to add to, or repeat it; and if we always find that we can add, we shall never find that we cannot add, which (as a very eminent writer on the subject || observes) is all the mystery of the matter, and all that can be understood by infinite space.

But it is farther urged that there must be something more in the present case; for we find not only a power of enlarging the idea, but find it impossible to set bounds to the thing; whereas, we can enlarge the idea of matter to infinity, and can also set bounds to the thing itself. In answer to the first part of this objection it is asked, What thing, I pray you, but the thing in your own mind,

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that

* True intell. syst. p. 644 and 766. || *Dr. Waterland* MS. afterwards published in the controversy with *Mr. Jackson*, about the ideas of space, time, &c.

do not stand in need of any *external cause*; if they depend on something else, there will be a question about that also, what it is, and what are its properties.

II. We

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that is, the idea? Prove it to be a thing and then we'll enquire whether it has bounds or not; but to say the thing is infinite or boundless, before you have proved it to exist, or to be a thing, is too large a step to take. The above-mentioned excellent writer solves the difficulty arising from the second part of the objection by another parallel case, 'When I consider the number of the stars, I can go numbering on in my thoughts still more and more in stars *infinitem*, but I can set bounds to them, can suppose number finite, but to number itself I can set no bounds. Yet what is number? Nothing but an abstract idea, nothing *ad extra*, and to say that number is infinite, comes only to this, that we can set no bounds to our faculty of numbering, it being always as easy to add to a thousand, or a million, one more, &c. as to one. Well then, to set bounds to number in the abstract, is to set bounds to the faculty itself, and to deny that it is in my power to add, when I plainly perceive that I can; and so is a direct contradiction. But as to the number of stars, or hairs, or men, or any thing, I can set bounds to that, without any contradiction, because it still leaves me in possession of the power of numbering, which I find I have; and which does not require any subject, *ad extra*, but may go on independent of any, and indifferent to all. Now to apply this to other cases: the mind finds in itself the faculty of enlarging and extending its idea of extension. It can apply it to matters or can let it alone; can suppose matter infinitely expanded, or can set bounds to it. But to set bounds to all extension, as well imaginary as real, is cramping the faculty, is denying it the power of enlarging, which is always present to the mind, and which she can never lose; and, in a word, is a contradiction. Any, either imaginary, or real subject is sufficient for the mind to exercise its faculties upon; and so if you either suppose God or matter, or space to be infinitely extended, it is equally satisfied with any. All that she requires, is, that she may be able to enlarge the idea of extension. But if you take from her extension itself, that is the idea of it, and the power of adding to it, you deprive her of her faculty, and deny her a power which she finds she has. In a word, we can set bounds to any thing that still leaves us the power of enlarging or extending infinitely, as we find we always can: and if we would speak strictly, it is not *number* that is *infinite*, nor *extension* infinite, which are nothing but *notions* abstracted from things: but the mind of man is able to proceed numbering or extending infinitely, that is, without ever coming to any stop or bounds. For to set bounds is to deny and destroy the faculty itself: if it could not always do it, it could not do it at all: he that can add one to one, as often as he will, can never find an end of numbering, nor he that can double an inch as often as he will, find an end of enlarging; it is all nothing more than repeating one of the easiest

II. We must presume that all our conceptions of simple objects without us are true, *i. e.* represent

We are to form our judgment of things whether they exist of themselves, or require a cause from our simple conceptions when there is no ground to suspect a fallacy.

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operations or exercises of the mind, and it will always be a contradiction for any rational mind to want it. The case being plainly thus, I think it should not be asked, why a man cannot set bounds to number or extension, but how he comes to have the faculty of counting and repeating, which is really tantamount to the other, and what it ultimately resolves into. And then, I suppose, the answer is very easy, and we need not go to the utmost limits of the world to enable us to resolve the riddle.

I cannot but smile to observe how grossly we are often imposed upon by words standing for abstract ideas, for want of considering how, and upon what occasions, these abstract ideas were invented for the help of weak and narrow conceptions, and have been used so long till they are thought to stand for real things.

This, I think, is a solid and ample confutation of the argument drawn from the *idea of space* and its imaginary *infinity*. We shall only add a word or two to shew that *duration*, (as well as *space*;) *number*, and all *quantity*; any thing which can be considered only by way of parts, is absolutely repugnant to, or incapable of true positive infinity in any respect. Now by a positive, or *metaphysical infinite* we always mean that which is absolutely *perfect* in its kind, which cannot admit of *addition*, or *increase*. It is an idea of a certain quality in the *abstract*, which has no mixture of the contrary quality in it, no *failure* or *defect*; and which therefore is our *standard* to which we always refer, and by which we try all imperfections, all mixed or finite qualities, which are for this reason called imperfect, because they fall short of our original standard, and are properly *negations* of it: consequently our idea of *perfection* must be a positive one, and prior to that of *imperfection*; as will appear from *Cudworth* cited in *Remark I.* where the reader may find a full account of this positive infinity, and how we get the idea of it and are able to distinguish it from that negative one explained by *Mr. Locke*, which is frequently confounded with it. To return,

If then a metaphysical infinite means *perfect*, or *that to which nothing can be added*, it is plain that duration, number, and all quantity, the very nature and idea of which includes perpetual *increasableness* or *addibility*, must be essentially incapable of this absolute or positive infinity, in like manner as *Cudworth* has shewn of space and body in the passage referred to above. Farther, if we attend to the notion of an *infinite series*, and take a view of the manifold absurdities which accompany it in any manner of conception, (from which absurdities we draw our proof of a *first Cause*, or *God*;) we shall be necessarily led to exclude from infinity all such things as exist *seriatim*, or must be conceived as consisting in and composed of *successive parts*, *i. e.* such as *duration*, *number*, *space*, *motion*, *magnitude*, &c. all which, when said to be infinite, are nothing but so many *infinite series*, and therefore liable to the same absurdities; as the abovementioned author has demonstrated of them all together. *Intell. Syst.* p. 642, &c. and of *motion* in particular, p. 843. The same is shewn of *dura-*

sent the things as God would have them known to us, except we elsewhere discover some fallacy or

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duration or time, by *Bentley, Boyle's Lett. Serm. 3. or by Sir M. Hale, Primit. Origin. of mankind, §. 1. c. iv. or Stillingfleet. Origines Sacrae, B. III. C. i. prop. 7, 8.* See also the confutation of an *infinite series* of successive beings in the beginning of note 10. and rem. b.* The like is shewn of number and all quantity, by the author of the *Impartial Enquiry into the Nature and Existence of God, p. 24, &c.*

Dr. Clarke endeavours to evade these arguments about parts, &c. by denying that any number of years, days, and hours: or of miles, yards, or feet, 'can be considered as any aliquot, or constituent parts of infinite time or space, or be compared at all with i., or bear any kind of proportion to it, or be the foundation of any argument in any question, concerning it.' *Demonstr. of Div. Attr. p. 37, 38 5th edit.* But does not this look like avoiding one great difficulty by admitting a greater? For how do we come at our confused idea of infinite quantity but by first having a clear idea of some certain part of that quantity; in space, for instance, of such a stated length as a foot, in time, of an hour, and then by doubling, trebling, or any way multiplying that same idea as long as we please, and still finding as much room for or possibility of multiplying it as we did when we began? See *Locke B. II. c. xvii. §. 3.* But does this idea of infinite, when applied to time or space, alter the very nature, essence, and idea of that time and space? Do not we still consider it as an infinity of the same time and space; or as consisting in a continual addibility of such portions of time and space; or as a whole made up of numberless such parts of time and space as are of the same kind with these hours and feet? To say that infinite space has no parts, is as *Leibnitz* urges in his fourth letter to Dr. Clarke, No. XI. p. 99.) 'to say that it does not consist of finite spaces; and that infinite space might subsist, though all finite spaces should be reduced to nothing. It is as if one should say, in the Cartesian supposition of a material, extended, unlimited world, that such a world might subsist, though all the bodies of which it consists, should be reduced to nothing†.' It is therefore impossible to conceive that hours and feet, &c. should not be aliquot parts of infinite time and space, and that these parts should not bear some kind of proportion to this infinity. These parts indeed will never reach our positive, absolute infinite (i. e. that to which nothing can possibly be added) because they include a perpetual addibility, as we observed, which is called their infinity, and which is a direct contradiction

* How this is consistent with the eternity of God, and what the true meaning of that attribute is, See note 10. rem. c. or *Bentley's Boyle's Lett. Serm. 3d.*

† See this plea fully confuted by *Colliber, Impartial Enquiry into the Existence and Nature of God, B. II. C. ii. p. 157, &c.*

or *prejudice* adhering to them. For we can judge of things no otherwise than from our conceptions. Nor are we to seek for any other *criterion of truth* than that a conception of any thing offered to the mind forcibly extorts assent: as there is no other criterion of objects perceived by the senses, than that an object, by its presence forces us to perceive

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contradiction to what we call a positive infinite: and therefore positive infinity applied to them is falsely applied, and a positive infinity of matter, number, time, space, or any quantity that consists of parts, or must be considered in succession, *i. e.* to which this negative infinite, and this only, is and must be applied, are all contradictions. Now instead of answering this argument against the absolute infinity of time and space, Dr. Clarke first of all *supposes* that time and space are absolutely infinite, and then because, according to this our way of conceiving infinity (which yet is the only way we have of conceiving it in these things) they could not possibly be infinite, he argues that we must not consider them in this way, namely as if their *parts* had any relation at all to their *infinity*. But should not the argument rather be reversed, and the consequence of it stand thus? This is our only way of conceiving any infinite applicable to these things, but this way we cannot conceive these to be positively infinite (or positive infinity cannot be applied to these) without a contradiction; therefore we cannot at all conceive these to be positively infinite without a contradiction, or therefore these are not positively infinite.

There is indeed a certain use of the term *infinite* among mathematicians, where this reasoning of Dr. Clarke's might be admitted, but that is only where they consider quantities relatively, and not absolutely, and therefore that can have no place where we are considering real existences. Thus when geometers say that one quantity is infinitely less than another, they mean that their infinitely small quantity is no *aliquot* part of, bears no proportion to, or cannot be compared with the other; but proportion is (nothing real but) purely relative, and therefore the term infinite applied here must be so too. Thus for instance, the angle of contact made by a curve and its tangent is infinitely less than any rectilinear angle, *i. e.* bears no proportion to it, is no measure of it, or cannot any ways be compared with it. But this is nothing to infinity in the sense in which Dr. Clarke has used it; since by that he must mean some determinate thing, something of which real existence may be predicated, which is very different from infinity in a relative sense, as it is sometimes considered by mathematicians; or in a progressive and indefinite one, which is the sense in which it is applied to quantities increasing or decreasing without end; and therefore what relates to these infinities cannot be the foundation of any argument concerning the other. The equivocal use of the word *infinite* in these different senses by jumbling mathematics and metaphysics together has, I believe, occasioned most of the confusion attending subjects of this kind.

perceive it even against our wills. If therefore the conceptions, which we have of these three before-mentioned, represent them to us as existing *necessarily*, so that they cannot be separated from existence even in thought, we must affirm that these exist of *themselves*, and require no *cause* of their *existence*. But if we can conceive these once not to have been, to have begun to be, or to be capable of annihilation, 'tis plain that *necessary existence* belongs not to them, nor are they of themselves; they must therefore have their being from something else. For, since they may either exist or not exist, existence is not of their nature, and if it be not of their nature, they must have it from without; and there wants a cause by which this indifference to or possibility of either existence or non-existence, may be determined. Nor do we judge a cause in things to be otherwise necessary than as they are in their own nature *indifferent*, that is, *passive* in regard to existence. For, if our conceptions represent something to us as necessary in its own nature, we enquire no farther about the cause whereby it exists. (4.)

III. If

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(4.) The sum of what our author is here endeavouring to prove is that neither *matter* nor *motion* (and he will shew the same by and by of *space*) can be independent or self-existent, and consequently that they require some cause of their existence distinct from and antecedent to themselves. And though he frequently makes use of that confused equivocal term, *necessary existence*, yet he seems to apply it only in a negative sense for *self-existence*, or *existence without cause*, which is as much as his argument requires. For where any thing appears to be an effect, as matter and motion do, we must require a cause; where no such *causedness* can be discovered, we call the thing *self-existent*, tho' perhaps it really be not so, but might proceed from something else; and where an absurdity would follow from supposing a being not to have existed once, or not to exist for the future, we say there is a *necessity* for supposing that it did and will always exist; or we stile that being *necessarily existent*; which is perhaps as far as we can go. But as these words, *necessary existence*, seem to have been taken to denote some *positive, extrinsic principle* of existence; and which accordingly is often stiled *antecedent, absolute, original necessity, a necessity simple, and uniform, and absolutely judi-*

III. If we apply this to our conceptions of the things in question, it will appear whether they be self-existent, or require a cause. In the first place let us examine *motion*, which is really *action*, but in all action it is necessary, if we may trust our thoughts, that there be an *agent* and a *patient*, without these we have no notion of action. In *motion* therefore, since that is action, there is required an *agent* and a *patient*. We have indeed the patient, namely *matter*; we must in the next place see what is the agent: *viz.* Whether matter produces motion in itself; or (to speak properly) whether motion be coeval with it, natural, and necessarily adhering to its essence, as figure is to body. But if we remember what was laid down above, and carefully examine the sentiments and conceptions of our minds,

It is proved that *motion* requires a cause, tho' it be supposed eternal; and that matter is not the cause of it.

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in its own nature, in itself, &c. It may be of some use to consider the several things to which these terms are applied, and what ideas we fix to them; which will perhaps convince us that they are all merely *relative*.

Necessity is chiefly and primarily applied to *means*; and when it is thus applied, it evidently has *relation* to some *end* to be attained by those *means* of which it is affirmed. Thus, when we say such a thing is necessary, we mean that some *end* cannot be attained without the existence of that thing. Thus religion is *necessary* to a rational creature, or more properly, to the happiness of a rational creature, *i. e.* a rational creature cannot attain happiness, its ultimate end, without religion. Farther, means being a relative idea, whatever is affirmed of means *as means*, must be relative also; or which is much the same, must be an affection of a relative idea, *v. g.* When we say, any action is *good, fit, right, reasonable, &c.* all these terms are or should be applied to it, as it is conceived to be a means to some end, and consequently are relative; therefore to call any action *fit, &c. in itself*, will be the same as to affirm any thing to be *relative in itself*, which is nonsense.

Necessity is also applied to *truth*, and then it has relation to some other truths, either antecedent or consequential, according to the different manner in which that truth is proved to be *necessary, i. e.* according as the proof is direct or indirect. When the proof is direct, *i. e.* when the truth of any proposition is shown to follow by unavoidable consequence from some other truth before known; then the *necessity* of that truth arises from the relation which it has to some antecedent truth: when the proof is indirect, *i. e.* when the truth of any proposition is shown, by

minds, it will appear that the nature of matter (as far as we know of it) is indifferent to *motion*, or *rest*, and moves not except it be moved. Motion therefore does not follow from its nature, nor is it contained in its essence, nor do we conceive it to arise from thence: matter is therefore merely passive in regard to motion, and an agent must be sought elsewhere. If you say it has been in motion from eternity, you will be never the nearer; for duration alters not the nature of things. If it has moved from eternity, it has had an eternal cause; and since mat-

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by shewing that the supposition of the contrary to that truth, *i. e.* the denying that, would imply the negation of, or be inconsistent with some other known truth; then the necessity of that truth arises from the relation which it has to some consequential truth. *Necessity* is also applied to axioms; and then it has relation to the terms themselves, *i. e.* it arises from the relation which is between the terms, and means that supposing or laying down those terms, that relation or connection between them cannot but be. Farther, the same may be said of *truth*, as of *means*, truth being relative also; consequently such phrases as these, *true or false in itself*, a *contradiction in itself*; or *absolutely such*, &c. are absurd ones.

Necessity is also applied to existence, and then it arises either from the relation which the existence of that thing of which it is affirmed has to the existence of *other things*; or from the relation which the existence of that thing has to the *manner of its own* existence. In the former signification, when necessity of existence has relation to the existence of other things, it denotes that the supposition of the non-existence of that thing of which necessity is affirmed, implies the non-existence of things which we know to exist. Thus some independent being does *necessarily exist*; because to suppose no independent being implies *that there are no dependent beings*, the contrary of which we know to be true; so that necessity of existence in this sense, is nothing else but necessity of truth as related to consequential truth. And this sort of proof is called *demonstratio a posteriori*.

When the necessity of existence arises from the relation which the existence of any thing has to the *manner of its own* existence, then necessity means that that thing of which it is affirmed exists after such a manner that it never could have not existed. Thus every *independent being*, or every being existing without a cause, is necessarily existing; because such a being from the *very manner* of its existing, could not begin to exist, therefore must always have existed, *i. e.* does necessarily exist. For to suppose a being to *begin* to exist, is to suppose a *mutation*, *viz* from non-entity to entity; and to suppose a mutation is to suppose a *cause*; for

ter is only passive with respect to the motion which is in it, if it was from eternity, it was still *passive only*, and there wanted an eternal agent to produce eternal motion (5) in it: for eternal action cannot be more easily conceived, without an eternal agent, than temporary, without a temporal one. But you will say, what is eternal, since it was never made, requires no cause. Why so? Suppose the sun to have shined from eternity, and the earth, nourished by its heat, to have undergone eternal vicissitudes of seasons; had those vicissitudes therefore no cause? Would they be ever the less dependent on the sun as their source and original? Hence it appears that eternity of action does not exclude an active cause, and it is so far from truth that such action was never produced, because it is conceived to have been from eternity, that we must rather say it has always been produced.

For

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for if there is no such cause, every thing must continue as it was. Therefore every being which had no *cause* of existence, *i. e.* which is independent, cannot begin to exist, consequently cannot be supposed not to exist, *i. e.* is *necessarily* existent. This some call *demonstratio a priori*.

Necessity as applied to existence in these two ways, must carefully be distinguished. For though an independent being cannot be necessarily existent in the former sense, without being so in the latter also; yet it may be necessarily existent in the latter sense without being so in the former. There may be two or more necessarily existent beings in the latter sense, *i. e.* with regard to *independence*, though in the former, *i. e.* in relation to this *system*, there can be but one necessarily existent being; which may serve to shew us the inconclusiveness of Dr. Clarke's seventh proposition. And upon the whole, I think we may be convinced that no ideas can possibly be fixed to these terms, *necessity absolute in itself*. See also the latter part of N. 10. and R. c.

(5.) Eternal motion seems to be a contradiction, [See infinite series in N. 3. and Collier's Impartial Enquiry, c. 7. and rem. b.] unless we could conceive two eternals, one before the other; as every mover must, in the order of our ideas, necessarily operate before the moved: these things therefore which imply beginning, change, succession, or increase. are finite as well in duration, as in any other respect, and consequently the suppositions here and below are all impossible ones.

Of how little importance that old controversy is, whether *matter* be eternal, may be gathered from note 1. which shews that there

For in the instance given it appears that the sun did always, and from eternity, cause the change of seasons : not that I think the sun really was, or could be eternal ; but if motion should be supposed eternal (which is the only subterfuge left to them that deny the necessity of an agent, in order to the existence of motion) the sun might equally be eternal with its light and their effects. And if this be granted, it will plainly appear, that *eternity of action* does not exclude an *active cause*. If then we follow the guidance of our thoughts, we must acknowledge that there is something beside *matter* and *motion*, which must be the cause of motion.

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IV. Secondly, as to matter itself, if we may suppose it to have had a beginning, or to be annihilated, *necessary* existence will manifestly not be implied in its nature, for that may be taken from it, at least in thought ; but a thing cannot be separated from its nature or essence even by the mind : if therefore existence were *essential* to matter, it could not be divided from it even in thought ; that is, we could not conceive matter not to exist. But who doubts whether he can do that ? Is it not as easy to conceive that *space* which the material world occupies to be *empty*, that is, void of matter, as *full* ? Cannot the understanding assign to the material world a beginning and an end ? They who admit of *space*, or a *vacuum* (6.) cannot deny but matter is at least

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there is properly no such thing as *matter*, distinct from body, *i. e.* a *solid substance every where the same*, which that word denotes, and which is not to be found in that precise manner of existence. But if, with our author, we take matter for *body* only, this as it undergoes perpetual changes is in its very nature incapable of eternity by remarks c. and d.

(6.) These two words *space* and *vacuum*, though they ought perhaps to have both the same meaning, *i. e.* neither of them to mean any real thing or quality existing in nature, but only a negation of matter and its qualities ; yet as the former is more evidently a positive term, it is apt to convey an idea of something

least mentally separable from existence. For space may be conceived either full or empty; that is, with matter, or without it. The notion therefore of the creation of matter, is no more repugnant to our conceptions, than the creation of space.

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positive, and thereby lead us to frame some imagination of that something, and so at length draw us into a notion quite different from that, which the latter word more naturally offers, and which comes nearer to the truth of the case; and therefore it seems not so convenient to use these two words promiscuously. It may be doubted whether our substituting the former of these terms for the latter, when the ideas usually fixt to them have in reality little to do with one another, may not have given rise to most of the disputes against a *vacuum*, which have been carried on by many able writers. *Vacuum*, in natural philosophy, is (according to the true import of the word) only *emptiness*, or absence of matter, *i. e.* a term that implies mere negation; though when we come to prove that matter exists not every where, or that there is really any such emptiness or absence of matter, we are obliged, through the defect of language, to make use of positive terms about it, *viz.* that there is a *vacuum* in this or that place, or that there is a real foundation in nature for supposing it. Hence, probably, metaphysicians, when they come to consider it, being used to the contemplation of abstract essences, are led to understand it as something positive, which might properly be said to *be here* and *there*, &c. Their next step is to bring it under the *imagination*, and so finding the idea of space or extension in some measure connected with this emptiness, they easily substitute one for the other, and often change the negative idea into a positive one, and define *vacuum* to be *extension void of solidity*, or *space without body* &c. whereas the ideas of vacuity and extension have no real connection with each other, as was said before, though they be very apt to go together. These two distinct ideas then being both included under the word *vacuum*, it becomes equivocal, and consequently that may be affirmed or denied of it according to the one idea, which cannot according to the other, and here is room for endless juggle. *v. g.* It may be said that there is a real foundation in nature for supposing a *vacuum* in the negative sense of the word, *i. e.* as signifying mere emptiness; but the same thing may be denied of it in the positive, *i. e.* as standing for pure extension, which is an *abstract idea* formed by the mind itself, and as such has no foundation any where else. Again, philosophers, who take a *vacuum* for space or extension in the abstract, stiffly deny that there is a *vacuum* in nature, which is true indeed of absolute space, which exists only in the mind, but is not so of vacuity or absence of matter, which has as real a foundation in nature as matter itself has; except we will argue that it cannot be said to *be* or to have *existence* predicated of it, because it is only a negation; which is playing upon and puzzling one another with words.

That it is not necessarily existent, as appears from the confession of those persons who suppose space to be the image of body.

V. But whether there be any such thing as space or no, we are certain that we have an *idea* of it, though whence we had it, philosophers are not agreed. Those that deny any distinction between it and body, bid us imagine matter of the world to be annihilated; and then, if we remember the things that did exist, without considering of what kind they were, but only that they were without the mind, we have what we call *space*. If this be true, then it will be certain that matter is not self-existent: for we may consider it as annihilated, neither can we attribute any other nature to it, than such as answers to our conceptions of it. If space therefore, according to them, be a phantasm of body, that is, an idea of body recalled to mind which formerly was, but now is not, or is not supposed to be; it is certain that body or matter, so far as we know any thing of its nature, is indifferent as to existence or non-existence. It has not therefore existence of itself; for that which exists by necessity of nature, existence enters into its *idea*, nor can it be conceived otherwise than as existing.

And of those who deny space to be distinguishable from matter, any other-wise than as extension in general is from a particular extension.

VI. Others deny that *space* is distinguishable from matter, any other way than as a *generic* quantity is from a *particular* one; for as when individuals are changed, the nature of man or animal remains unchanged: so when body is changed or translated into another place, the extension of the place which is occupied remains unchanged, namely empty, or filled with another body. I would not spend a censure on this reasoning; but granting it to be true, it would follow that body or matter contains nothing in the idea of it, which might induce us to believe that it is of itself, or exists by the necessity of its nature: but on the contrary, that it may be annihilated at least in conception.

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If therefore we consult our ideas, we must confess that matter does not exist necessarily, but is as indifferent to existence or non-existence, as to *motion* or *rest*; i. e. is in that respect merely passive. It requires a cause then which may determine it to *existence* no less than to *motion*. For that which is not of itself must necessarily be of another, nor can we know that any thing is of itself, otherwise than from the ideas which we have of its nature; if these represent the nature of any thing as *necessarily* existing, so that we cannot conceive it not to be, we enquire no farther about its cause; if not, we fly to a cause; nor is the understanding satisfied till it has found one. Why are we inquisitive about the original of man, or any thing else? but only because our conceptions represent these as indifferent in themselves to *being*, and therefore as requiring some cause of their existence distinct from themselves. From the nature then of *matter* as well as *motion*, we are forced to admit of *another* principle to be the cause of both.

VII. Thirdly. As to *space*, many doubt whether its nature be distinguishable from existence. Whether it can be annihilated even in thought, or conceived not to have been. For when the whole material world is annihilated in the mind, the idea of *space* remains, as of a thing yet existing; it obtrudes itself upon the understanding, and suffers us not to assign any beginning or end of its existence. It forces us therefore to confess, whether we will or no, that it exists; nor does it seem to require a cause why it exists, since it is of such a nature as being self-sufficient, must have existence of itself. For what will be self-existent, if that is not, which cannot even be conceived not to exist?

That *space* seems at first sight inseparable from existence.

VIII. This seems to argue strongly for the *self-existence* of *space*. Yet a doubt may arise whether

It is shewn that this may

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whether this inability of our understanding to separate the nature of *space* from existence, proceed from that *same nature* of space, or rather from the *imperfection* of our reason. For though all our simple conceptions must for the most part be looked upon as true, as we said before*, yet these are to be excepted from this rule in which we find any grounds of fallacy or *prejudice*. And in this reasoning about space, it is to be suspected that we connect existence with its nature merely out of *prejudice*.

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IX. We may understand how this comes to pass, if we consider 1st. That our conceptions come for the most part *from without*, when therefore something is represented to our minds, we always conceive it as without us: this notion therefore of *external* and *internal* adheres to all our conceptions, and we continually assign a *place* to every thing which we happen to think of; but that there should be any thing external, or which has a *place* and no *space*, is inconceivable. As long then as we think of any thing external, we cannot but at the same time believe that space exists, in which space we conceive that thing to exist. For while we suppose any thing existing beside ourselves, that necessarily seems to be without us; but imagine all *externals* removed, and turn the mind upon itself, and that *without* will be taken away, and together with it the necessity of *space* or *place*. For while we conceive nothing to exist beside ourselves, *i. e.* our *minds*, we do not think of this *without*, that is, of *space*, nor see any necessity for its existence. (7.)

X. It

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(7.) From hence, I think, it appears sufficiently that *space* were it granted to have any real existence at all, I mean to be any thing more than an idea in our minds (which some perhaps will not be very ready to grant, from an attentive consideration of the

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* Sect. II. Parag. II.

X. It is to be observed farther, that when we annihilate any thing in our mind, we consider it as

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Notes (3. and 6.) yet it cannot be supposed to exist necessarily, in Dr. Clarke's sense of *necessary existence*. For according to him, * * Whatever is necessarily existing, there is need room of of its existence, in order to the supposal of the existence of them; but * any other thing; so that nothing can possibly be supposed to we have * exist, without presupposing and including antecedently the ex- nothing * istence of that which is necessary. Therefore the supposing to substi- * of any thing possibly to exist alone, so as not necessarily to tute for * include the presupposal of some other thing, proves de- Space. * monstrably that *that* other thing is not necessarily existing; * because, whatsoever has necessary existence cannot possibly * in any conception whatsoever, be supposed away. There can- * not possibly be any notion of the existence of any thing, * there cannot possibly be any notion of existence at all, but * what shall necessarily preinclude the notion of that which is * necessarily existent.

Now if we can consider our own Souls as existing alone and without this *space*, without considering it as a *causa sine qua non*, or in any other respect; without *presupposing*, or any ways including it: This (according to the Doctor himself) will prove demonstrably that space is not necessarily existent. But let any one shew us what necessity there is for the existence of *space*, in order to the supposal of the existence of a *spirit*. Let him try whether he cannot conceive an *immaterial thinking substance*, without the idea of *space* or *extension*; nay, whether he can possibly conceive it with them; whether these ideas are at all applicable to an immaterial Being, and not rather repugnant and contradictory to the very notion of it: whether they belong not solely to *matter*, and if they were annihilated, might not easily be supposed away. Few, I believe, beside Dr. Clarke, can apprehend how space is (as he calls it in his 4th reply to Leibnitz) † the *Place of all Ideas*. Space and spirit, and the distinct properties of each, appear to me as distant and incompatible, as the most remote and inconsistent things in nature; and an *extended soul* seems just such another Phrase as a *green sound*, or an *ill of consciousness*. Dr. Clarke grants, that ‡ *extension does not belong to Thought*, (as our Author has indeed proved in many of its modes, in parag. XIV. and XV.) and at the same time endeavours to shift off the Consequence by answering, that thought is not a Being. But where's the difference in this respect? Don't we frame our idea of the *Being* from its constituent *properties*? And if these have no manner of relation to *Extension*, why should the supposed Being to which

* Answer to the first Letter, p. 10.

† N. 29. p. 144.

‡ Answer to the second Letter, p. 16.

That things are conceived to be annihilated by substituting

something else in the room of

something evanescent, and removed out of sight; but yet we look upon some other thing as substituted in the room of that which disappeared; thus when *accidents* are removed, we conceive the *substance* remaining; setting aside *matter*, we substitute *space*; but when *space* is removed, we have nothing to substitute in its stead, except material or external things; but all these suppose *space*, and cannot be conceived without it; no wonder then that we cannot annihilate *space*, while conceive these as existing. If therefore we would come to a right Understanding of the nature of *space*, we must not apply our minds to any thing *material* or *external*, but attend to our own thoughts and sensations, which have no relation to external things or to Quantity: And when our minds are thus employed, there will appear to be no more necessity for the existence of *space* than of *matter*.

We attempt to annihilate *space* while those things continue which suppose it, and therefore it cannot be annihilated.

XI. It proceeds therefore from *prejudice*, and an unwary way of thinking, that we couple necessity of existence with *space*; neither do we observe that for this very reason we cannot conceive *space* not to exist, because we imagine those things still existing, which cannot exist without *space*; which is no greater a wonder than if any one intent upon the mobility of the heavenly bodies, should complain that

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which they belong have any? * Which Being is indeed nothing but the aggregate of these properties. See Note 1. I'm apt to think that our conceiving *substance* by way of *substratum*, has led us into the notion that all kind of substances must be extended; and 'tis perhaps impossible for us to imagine any such thing as an *unextended substance*; but yet reason convinces us, that there are many real things of which we can form no *imagination*. And that there are Beings in nature to which no manner of extension can possibly be applied, we find sufficiently proved by Cudworth †.

* See R. h. at the end of this chapter.

† Intell. Syst. p. 823.—832.

that he could not annihilate the *matter* of them, while the *motion* continued; for material and external things have no less dependance on and Connection with *space*, than mobility has with *matter*; if then we conceive God only to exist, while he contemplates himself as existing alone, he can no more be judged to stand in need of *space*, or be conscious of it as actually existing, than we are while we contemplate only the reflex acts of the mind. But when he willed external things, he made *place* or *space* for them to exist in.

XII. It may be objected that *we can separate Existence from God* after the same manner as we endeavour to remove it from *space*. For the mind being reflected on itself, and solely intent upon contemplating its operations, may deny God to exist as well as *space*. If therefore we deny *space* to be self-existent, because we can consider our mind as existing alone in Nature, and consequently *space* as not existing; why may not we, by the same way of reasoning, deny that God is *self-existent*? I answer, we are conscious that we do not exist of ourselves, while therefore we contemplate ourselves and our intellectual operations, we are necessarily carried to some cause; being certain that we have existence from another, and not of ourselves; we cannot therefore exert even one act of the understanding but it must have a necessary connection with some cause distinct from us.

XIII. We cannot therefore conceive ourselves as the only beings in nature, for we must admit, along with us, the cause from which we derive existence, which is a confused conception of God. But the same cannot be said of *space*: for the operations of our mind are so intimately perceived by us as to

God cannot be conceived not to exist.

Because we are conscious that we do not exist of ourselves.

have no necessary connection with space, and we understand clearly enough that these may be, tho' there were no space, and do not stand in need of it for their existence. If we conceive ourselves as consisting of both *body* and *mind*, 'tis certain we stand in need of space for our existence, and during that conception, 'tis impossible for us to conceive space to be annihilated; viz. because such a conception has a necessary connection with space. After the same manner, if we conceive ourselves to be *mind* only, yet we must own the existence of God. For a finite mind requires a cause *from* which it may receive existence, no less than a body does a place *in* which it may exist; and from hence, in reality, it is that we attribute *self-existence* to space, because whenever we think of ourselves, we imagine ourselves to consist of both *body* and *mind*. While therefore we are conscious of our own existence, we form our belief of space also as necessarily existing, since it is connected with the conception of *Body*, i. e. of *ourselves*.

Smell,
taste,
hearing,
do not
give us
any notice
of the
existence
of space.

XIV. Secondly, It is remarkable that the conceptions which we have from *hearing*, *smelling*, or *tasting*, tho' they be produced in us by external objects, yet they have no connection with the conceptions of space; for who can imagine the longitude, latitude, or profundity of *sound*, *smell*, or *taste*? If then we had only these three senses, we should not so much as imagine that there was any space. Our conceptions therefore abstract from all extension, nor do the notions of external and internal adhere so closely to our thoughts but we may lay them aside; and if we set these aside, the self-existence of space does not necessarily *obtrude* itself upon us. Now as the common people attribute *smells*, *tastes*, *colours*,
and

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and other *sensible qualities* to the objects themselves, and believe that they exist in them; while they who attend better to their thoughts, know that they exist only in the mind, and are nothing in the things by which they are produced, beside the peculiar motion and texture of their parts; after the same manner, 'tis probable, we are imposed upon in attributing necessary existence to space, because we observe that almost all our thoughts are produced in us from without, and thereby accustoming ourselves to join space with them, while we are conscious that we think, we conceive also that space exists; Whereas, if we remember that all our sensations, even those produced by external things, such as *smells*, &c. do not bring along with them the notion of space, we may easily lay aside this prejudice, and withdrawing our thoughts from the contemplation of space, may conceive it not to be.

XV. And this will appear, Thirdly, if by a reflex act we view the *mind itself* and its *operations*; for nothing of extension or space offers itself in these; nor does the mind, when employed about them, think at all of space, nor is it conscious that it occupies space: It withdraws therefore from the conceptions of *internal* and *external*, and may conceive nothing to be in the world besides *itself*, and its *cause*; i. e. can imagine space to be non-existent. Thinking Beings then may exist without space; it proceeds therefore from *prejudice* that we join *necessary existence* with it.

XVI. Fourthly, It is to be remarked that space, so far as appears to our conceptions, is of such a Nature as cannot be annihilated by *parts*, for they are in such a manner united to and dependent upon one another, that if we

The mind reflected upon itself has no relation to space, nor any necessity for it.

We may conceive space to be annihilated all together, but not by *sup- parts.*

suppose one part, it will imply a contradiction for the others not to exist. We can in thought remove all water out of a vessel, or chamber, and the space interjacent between the walls remains extended in length, breadth, and depth: But the space cannot be *removed*, since it is of its own Nature immoveable, (8.) nor can it be *annihilated*; for distance would remain between the bounds, which cannot be without extension, nor extension without a subject; but space, as far as we can conceive it, is the primary *subject* (9.) of extension: therefore

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(8.) That is, as I have often hinted, if we suppose it to have any *real nature* or to *exist* at all, it must, as our Author says, exist every where, and cannot be removed by parts. And in this Sense should the Words of Sir Isaac Newton be understood*. “The order of the parts of space is immutable; remove these from their places, and you will remove them, as I may say, from themselves.” For to suppose it all at once away, seems so far from amounting to that *absurd supposition* mentioned by Dr. Clarke † that it is no more than what must be conceived in every *annihilation* of any thing, which is the total destruction or *taking away* of existence, the removal of it, as we may say, *from itself*, or from Being: Which is a supposition that is generally thought to carry no absurdity along with it.

(9.) Dr. Clarke affirms ‡ that *space* is not a *substance*; and yet declares that it has *real qualities* §. Is not this either to suppose *qualities* or *properties* inherent in one another? Or else, with Gassendus, to imagine some *middle* thing between *substance* and *accident*, which is neither of them, but partakes of both?

The learned Writer referred to in Note 3. is of the same opinion with our Author in this Place, *viz.* that we are apt to conceive space to be a sort of substance or *substratum* of extension, and so are used to attribute that and other imaginary qualities to it. ‘The Idea of space is not the Idea of extension, but of something extended, it is the *Substratum* of extension, and not extension itself. But when I say it is the *Substratum*, do not imagine I make it to be any thing without; it is an *Ideal Substratum*, and nothing more. When the Mind has been considering the idea of extension abstracted from the extended Bodies, from whence it first received the idea, (whether as they were *causes* or occasions,

* Princ. schol. ad. def. 8.

† Answer to the 6th letter, p. 39.

‡ Answer to the 3d lett. p. 22. and to the 4th, p. 28.

§ Answer to the letter, p. 30.

fore it necessarily continues with Distance, nor can it be annihilated, unless we would have

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of it I consider not now) it is a very easy Step for the Mind to make farther, to frame an *imaginary substratum* to support an *imaginary extension*. And this is the more easy because the idea we have of a *real substratum* or substance, the support of real qualities is dark and confused, an idea of *somewhat*, and that's all. Now it is but joining the idea of *somewhat* with the idea of one quality only, namely extension, and we have an *imaginary substratum* presently formed, that is, an ideal of *space*, or an *ideal* extended something. Whether this be not the very Case, I must leave to any man to judge by reflecting on his own ideas.

Again; To this Question, *Why may not Space be rather defined extension in the abstract, or imaginary extension rather than the imaginary substratum of imaginary extension?* He answers, 'Extension in the general or in the abstract, is an idea of pure intellect, i. e. is to be understood, but cannot be imagined, any more than *whiteness* in the general, or a thousand other the like abstract ideas. But as soon as *Imagination* comes to deal with this general abstract Idea (or ideas) it supplies it with an *imaginary* substratum, and so makes the *general* which was *invisible*, be conceived as a *particular*, for the help of the understanding. So if the imagination comes to conceive any certain degree of *whiteness*, it supplies the mind with some imaginary white surface, and brings down the general idea to a particular object. In like manner, when it comes to conceive a *length*, a *breadth*, a *thickness*, it supplies the mind with a substratum *pro hoc vice*, such as may serve the purpose, otherwise the mind must rest in pure intellect only, as in numbers; and there is nothing more tedious or uneasy to the mind generally than to be wholly *abstracted*; which is the reason, by the way, that *arithmetical* demonstrations, tho' as clear and certain as any, are less delightful than *geometrical*, and nothing more irksome than abstract numbers. Now space being the Object of the *imagination*, and not of pure intellect, as are all general, abstract Ideas, it is properly the *imaginary substratum of an imaginary extension*, or the general idea of extension particularized in an *imaginary subject*; and hence it is that *space* is said to be extended, which would be nonsense to say of extension itself: And bodies are said to be *in Space*, which would likewise be nonsense to say of *extension*. And so it is conceived as *immoveable*, *invisible*, *infinite*. Immoveable, &c. all Properties of Substances; which makes it plain that it is conceived after the manner of substance, and therefore is, because it can be nothing else, an *imaginary substratum*, which the Mind takes to particularize, and thereby render conceivable its general idea of extension; which could not otherwise fall within the Imagination, nor be estimated any way but by abstract numbers, so many yards, or so many miles, 10, 20, 30;

extension without a subject, that is into *length*, *breadth*, and *depth* without any thing *long*, *broad* and *deep*. Hence it appears that space cannot be *partially* annihilated, and from hence the opinion of its *self-existence* might arise.

Hence arose the prejudice for its self-existence.

XVII. For since it is of such a nature as must be annihilated either altogether, or not at all, they that attempted to annihilate it only by *parts*, saw that it was impossible to be done, the nature of the thing remonstrated against a partial annihilation, and if one part be supposed, all others might be demonstrated to exist by necessary connection. But if any one should suppose all extended things to be removed together at once, he would find nothing impossible in that supposition: For one may imagine nothing to exist in nature beside his own soul, and the cause on which it depends; which, as a thinking Being, includes nothing of extension in it: Every thing that is extended may therefore be separated from existence. But they that attempted this by parts, when they found it impossible, did not scruple to resolve the cause into the self-existence of space, tho' in reality it did not arise from thence, but from this, that they attempted to separate things naturally inseparable, namely, the parts of space one from another.

We are certain of a *first* cause in what manner soever the dispute about space be determined.

XVIII. But whether there be any such thing as space or no; whether its extension be distinguished from the extension of *body*, or not: Be it nothing at all; Be it mere *privation of contact*, as some are pleased to term it; be it mere *possibility* or *capacity* of existing, as others; be it, lastly, either something *created*,

or

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* without attending to any thing but the numbers, and the meaning of the words, yards, miles, &c. as it is when we reckon ounces, pounds, &c. of weight—Thus then you see how we come by the notion of *space*, and what it is.

See also Note 3.

or of *itself*, and *necessarily existing*; yet still, as far as we know any thing of the nature of it, 'tis an *indolent* thing, it neither acts, nor is the least acted upon, it cannot therefore, as mere *extension*, under which notion only it appears to us, be the *cause* of *matter*, or impress *motion* on it. There must then necessarily be another *cause* of *matter* and *motion*, that is *active*, *self-existent*, and the cause of all *things* and *actions*, which, since they are not of themselves, require a *Cause*.

S E C T. III.

Of the First Cause.

Our reasonings about the first cause are like those of a blind man about light, since it is not an object of sense.

WHAT this *active Principle* is we cannot apprehend otherwise than by *reason*, for it occurs not to the senses, unless by its *Effects*; nor is it perceived by them any more than *Light* is by the Ears; Our reasonings therefore about this principle will be like those of a *blind man* about *light*. A *blind man* may be assured that there is a certain thing called *light*, which the eye can perceive, as the nose can smell; he may be taught also by them who see, to understand many advantages of *light*, namely, that it can direct the steps, that it can *warm*, that it derives its origin from a large remote body, *i. e.* the *Sun*; that by the help of it very *distant* bodies may be perceived, with their *forms* and other *qualities* unknown to him; and that *Fire* which affords only *heat* to him, can give *light* also to them who see: Lastly, that it arises from some motion in the minutest particles of a *fluid*.

Yet we know a great many things concerning it.

II. From these *external* properties he might discourse of *Light*, and in some measure understand the reasonings of other men upon it; he would believe it to be distinct from *heat*; he would eagerly desire, and willingly undergo many hardships to enjoy the benefit of it; yet would he never have any such sense of it as those who see. After the same manner we may know many things about this *active principle*, which we are compelled, by the force of reasons, to believe certainly to exist, tho' we are no less ignorant of what it is in itself, than

than the blind Man is of the Sensation which Light produces in those who see*.

III. For instance ; In the first place we are certain that all other things come from this *active principle* : for nothing else, as we have shewn before,† contains in itself *necessary existence* or *active power*, entirely independent of any other ; as therefore itself is from none, so all others are from it. For from hence we conclude that this principle does not exist, because after considering the rest of the things which do exist, we perceive that they could neither *be* nor *act*, if that had not existed, and excited motion in them. That all other things proceed from it.

IV. *Secondly*, We are certain that this principle is *one*, similar and uniform : for *matter* is, as to its *essence*, every where *one* and *alike* ; the same must be said of space, if we grant it to be any thing distinct from matter : much more must the cause which fills space with matter be *one*, *simple* and *uniform*. (10.) That it is one.

V. *Thirdly*,

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* *This Comparison is farther illustrated by the Author of the Procedure of Human Understanding, in his Introduction : Concerning the use which is made of it. See Rem. k.*

(10.) This Argument (as well as some others hereafter mentioned) were the Foundation of it true, can but be called a presumptive one at best : nay, in truth the contrary will rather follow from the *multiplicity* and *diversity* of created *Substances*. We shall therefore endeavour to give a distinct proof of the *Being* and *Attributes* of God, so far at least as the knowledge of them may affect our present subject.

Now these seem capable of a clear deduction from this one *self evident principle* * *I exist. I myself exist* : therefore *something* exists. If *something* exists now, then something has existed *always*. Otherwise that something which now exists, must *once* either have been made by *nothing*, i. e. been *caused* by no *cause*, which is absurd ; or else have *made* itself, i. e. have *acted* before it *existed*, or been at once both *effect* and *cause* ; which is also absurd ; or, lastly, (which is the only supposition left) it must have been produced by something, which had its existence from something *else*, which also depended on some *other* cause, and so on in an *infinite Series* of caused or successive

† §. 2. Paragr. 3, 4, 5, &c. and remark e.

* See remark a. at the end of Chap. I.

beings

Infinite in
nature
and power.

V. Thirdly, That it is *infinite* both in *nature* and *power*; for since it exists of *itself*, there is

no-

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beings, without any eternal or first cause; which is also absurd. For either *some one* part of this infinite series has not been *successive* to any other, or else *all* the several parts of it have been successive: if *some one* part of it has not, then there was a *first*, which destroys the supposition; if all the several parts of it have been successive to each other, then they have all once been *future*; and if they have been all once future, then there was a time when *none* of them existed; and if there was a time when *none* of them existed, then either all the *Parts* of this *infinite Series*, and consequently the *whole*, must have arisen from *nothing*, which is absurd; or else there must be something in the *whole* beside what is contained in all the *parts*; which is also absurd. Or thus: Since all the parts of this *infinite series* are *successive* or *future* to one another, they must once either have been all future, *i. e.* *non-existent* (and then the second absurdity will follow, *i. e.* *that this whole series arose from nothing*) or else all but *some one*, (and then the first will follow, *i. e.* *that it had a beginning*) which *one* added to the rest either makes them *infinite*, which is absurd; or they are *infinite* without that one, and then that one added to them, either makes one more than *infinite*, or adds nothing at all; both which are absurdities.

If it be said that an Infinite Series is supposed to have no *whole*, I grant it, and on that very account the supposition is an absurd one; since whatsoever has real *parts*, must have a *whole*, *i. e.* some positive, certain and determinate number of these same parts, whether they be considered as co-existent with or coming in succession to each other; now no number being so great but that we may still assign a greater; it follows that neither *number* itself, nor any thing to which number may be applied can become capable of a proper *infinity*, as is shewn in note 3. and some of the *remarks* below.*

From the Impossibility of an Infinite Series we gather the *Eternity* † of *some one Thing or Being* (That every one is not in like manner eternal *a parte ante*, or *never had a Beginning*; particularly that no *Body* or *material System* can be so (and the same reasons hold equally against any *imperfect immaterial Substance*) is sufficiently proved in *Mrs. Newcome's Enquiry into the Existence of the Christian Religion* ‡.)

From *Eternity* comes *Independence* or *Self-existence*. For that which never had a beginning of Existence, could not possibly have any *cause* of that Existence (for then it would not be the *first cause*, contrary to what we have proved above) could *depend* upon no other thing for it, *i. e.* must be *independent*; or, which is the same thing, must exist of itself; *i. e.* *be self-existent*.

From *a parte post*, or *necessary Existence*; or an impossibility of ever ceasing to be, follows from *Independence* §. For what depends upon no Cause can never be altered or destroyed

* R. b. † R. c. ‡ R. d. § R. e.

by

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nothing that can bound its *nature* or *power*. 'Tis to be observed farther, that the number of *possible*

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by any, (as is shewn in Note 4. and Remark e) and therefore must continue as it is.

From independence comes also *Omnipotence*. For a Being that depends upon no external cause for his existence, and has *active Power*, (as was shewn at the same time that we proved his Existence, and by the same medium) cannot depend upon any for the exertion of that power, and consequently no *limits* can be applied to either his existence or power. For *limitation* is an *effect* of some *superior cause*, which in the *present* case there cannot be: consequently to suppose *limits* where there can be no *limiter*, is to suppose an *effect* without a *cause*°.

To suppose this being limited *in* or *by* its own *nature*, is to suppose some *nature antecedent*, or *limiting quality superior* to that being, to the existence of whom no thing, no quality is in any respect *antecedent* or *superior*: and to suppose that there is no such thing as *action* or *power* in a being which appears to be the fountain of all action and power, is (if possible) the worst supposition of all.

Liberty is also included in the idea of omnipotence: *active power* implies *freedom*: *infinite power* is *absolute freedom*. What therefore has no bounds let to its power, what can have no opposition made to its will, nor restraint laid on its actions, must both will and act *freely*. This attribute is also proved from the beginning of motion, and the creation and disposition of *indifferent* thing†.

But tho' this being is *free*, and as such the author of *change* in other beings, yet he must himself be *unchangeable*. For all *changes* have a beginning, and consequently are effects of some *prior causes*: but there can be nothing *prior* to the existence of this being, as he is *eternal*; neither any *cause* of it, as he is *independent*; nor consequently any *change* in it; except we could suppose him to *change himself*, which is the same absurdity as to *produce himself*, *i. e.* to be at the same time both *effect* and *cause*.

Thus we come to the knowledge of an *eternal, independent, Omnipotent, free and unchangeable Being*.

Omniscience, as well as some of the foregoing attributes, may be more easily deduced thus. We find in ourselves such qualities as *thought* and *intelligence, power, freedom, &c.* of which we have *intuitive knowledge*, as much as of our own *existence*; and that to have these is a *perfection*, or better than to be without them: we find also that these have not been in us from *eternity*, consequently they must have had a *beginning*, and consequently some *cause*, (for the same reason that a *being*, beginning to exist in time, requires a *cause*) which *cause*, as it must be *superior* to its *effect*, has them in a *superior degree*‡; and if it be the *first cause*, as itself can depend upon no other, must have them in *perfection*, or in an *infinite or unlimited degree*.

° See the latter part of R. k. † Rem. f. ‡ See note c. 11. 107. (if

ble things is conceived by us to be infinite, at least in power, but nothing can be possible, to which

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(if these words can properly be here applied *,) since *bounds* or *limitation* would be without a limiter (as has been shewn) i. e. an effect without a cause.

The *phenomena* of nature also leads us up to *one* such first cause, which is sufficient for their production, and therefore none else are necessary; and tho' several more independent Beings might possibly exist, yet would they be no Gods to us; for they would have no manner of relation to us, nor we any thing to do with them †. Since therefore the same reason holds for no more than *one* such, to suppose more than one is at least unreasonable.

These seem to be all the *simple* attributes observable in the Divine Nature, which as they are differently combined by us, come under different names. Thus the unlimited exercise of God's *knowledge* and *power* demonstrates him *omnipresent*, i. e. at all times and in all places so present with every creature as to have an absolute *knowledge* of and *power* over it; always to supervise and govern it ‡.

His enjoying all conceivable perfections in an entire absolute manner, denotes him infinite, or rather absolutely perfect ||; and, which is the same thing, his being capable of no want, defect, or unhappiness whatsoever, defines him *all-sufficient*.

The *moral* attributes of God may be deduced from these natural ones, and are immediate consequences of them when exercised on other Beings. They seem to be the perfection of his external acts rather than any new internal perfections of his nature, and may be termed his *secondary, relative* attributes¶.

And tho' the existence of any moral quality or action is not capable of strict demonstration, because every moral action or quality, as such, depends upon the will of the agent, which must be absolutely free: Yet we have as great assurance that there are moral qualities in God, and that he will always act according to these moral qualities, as the nature of the thing admits, and may be as well satisfied of it as if we could demonstrate it ††.

I shall begin with a self-evident proposition.

Pleasure is different from *pain*; consequently there is a *difference* in things. Pleasure is fit for, or agreeable to the nature of a sensible Being, or (as these words are commonly used) a *natural good*; pain is *unfit*, or is a *natural evil*: consequently there is a *natural fitness* and *unfitness* of things; or (which is the very same, and what these terms should always mean) *natural good* and *evil*.

The voluntary application of this natural good and evil,

* See R. l. † R. g.

‡ R. h. || See Woolaston, p. 70. 93.

¶ See the impartial enquiry, &c. p. 29, 63. or Note 52.

†† See Ditton on moral evidence, p. 1, 2.

which there is not some *power correspondent*, that might actually effect it; since therefore the things

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to any *rational* being, or the production* of it by a rational being, is moral good and evil: consequently there is such a thing as moral good and evil. An *inclination* to and *approbation* of this moral good is in every rational creature†, and is perfective of its nature, and therefore it must be communicated by, and consequently be inherent in the Creator‡.

To act agreeably to this inclination and approbation is also a perfection: the contrary an imperfection; consequently the former, as it is a perfection found in some degree in the Creature, must belong to and be in the highest degree in the Creator, who has been already proved to have all *natural* perfections in an infinite or perfect degree §; and therefore he must have all *moral* ones so too.

As his *knowledge* and *power* are *perfect*, he must always both perceive and be able to pursue this moral good. And as his *happiness* is *complete*, there can be no possible reason why he should ever *will* the contrary; nay, there is a good reason why he should not, namely, otherwise a perfect Being would contradict itself, and will a *defect* or *imperfection*, i. e. be perfect and not perfect at the same time: or, a Being infinitely happy, and who loves and approves himself because he is so, would hate and disapprove the very same thing in others, i. e. would love his own nature, and yet hate any thing that resembles it; which is absurd ||. It follows then that he must always *know*, be *able*, and *willing* to do, and therefore *actually* do what is absolutely *best*, i. e. produce the greatest sum of happiness, or be absolutely and completely *good*.

This also was included in the inclination and approbation above mentioned. For if he has given us benevolent affections and a sense which approves them, he must himself have both the same affections, and the same sense of them ††.

Again; the idea of *goodness* properly implies a disposition to communicate happiness to others; if then this Being be *good*, he must actually have communicated happiness to others; and *vice versa*, if he have communicated happiness to others, he must be *good*: but this Being has communicated happiness to others, therefore he is *good*.

The idea of *wisdom* implies his knowledge and observance of the most proper methods of effecting this, and is included in his *omniscience*; it being nothing but that very knowledge considered with relation to practice. It appears farther from considering the only *causes* of *imprudence* in men, which are either *ignorance*, *partiality*, or *inattention*; none of which can have place in God: he cannot be ignorant of any thing, since

* R. i. † See the latter part of rem. i. ‡ R. k. § R. l.

|| See *Scott's* works, v. 2. dis. vii. p. 30.

†† See R. i.

things that are possible cannot be limited, there must also be a cause infinitely powerful. For

as

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Both all things and their *relations* to each other, proceed from him : he cannot be *arw'd* by any *power*, or *sway'd* by any *interest* since (as has been shewn) he is *independent* and *all-sufficient* ; and he cannot be *inattentive*, since he always sees every thing *intuitively* ; and consequently he must always *know* and *do* what is *fittest* and *wisest* to be done.

From which also follows his *justice* : for he that sees all the *circumstances of things* and the *qualifications of persons* and has *ability* to *regulate* these, and no manner of *temptation* to do otherwise, must certainly suit these circumstances to those qualifications, or provide that persons receive the natural and proper consequence of their actions ; or (which is the same) do with every person what is exactly *just* and *right*.

The same also holds for his *holiness* and *veracity*, or rather *faithfulness*. As to the former, he must always dislike and detest evil, since it can never become agreeable to his *perfections*, or serviceable to his *use* : as to the latter, he must adhere to *truth*, as it is a *perfection*, and co-incident with *good*, &c. since he can have no possible *reason* or conceivable *motive* to deviate from it *.

Thus may we reason about the several moral perfections of the supreme being, as they are commonly distinguish'd. But that which should chiefly direct us in these our enquiries is the idea of his *infinite goodness*, which implies, or rather includes them all. Nay, all the other moral attributes (if they can properly be called attributes) are so far from existing apart from this, that they ought to be considered only as so many different *views* of the same *goodness* in the Creator ; and various *sources* of *happiness* to the creature. These are always *sub-ordinate* to and *regulated* by this one principal perfection and brightest ray of the divinity. Thus we conceive his *justice* to be exerted on any Being no farther than his goodness necessarily requires, in order to the making that Being, or others, *sensible* of the *pernicious* nature and *effects* of *sin* ; and thereby bringing either *it*, or some *others*, to as great a degree of happiness as their several *natures* become capable of† His *holiness* hates and abhors all *wickedness*, only as the *necessary* consequence of it is absolute and unavoidable *misery*, and his *veracity* or *faithfulness* seems to be no farther concerned for truth, than as it is connected with and productive of the happiness of all rational Beings : to provide the *properest* means for attaining which great *end* is the exercise of his *wisdom*.

I have all along declined the argument *a priori*, drawn from the antecedent *necessity* of *existence*, as well for the reasons given in R. e. as also because it seemed not to carry *some* attributes so far as they might be deduced *a posteriori*, and to

* See bp. *Wilkins*. nat. rel. c. 10. p. 142. 6th edit.

† R. m.

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as one possibility requires an equal cause, so infinite possibilities require a cause infinitely powerful.

H (11.) Our

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be scarce consistent with *others*. That the *self-existent* being, for instance, is not a *blind, unintelligent* necessity, but in the most proper sense an *understanding* and really *active* being, cannot be demonstrated strictly and properly *a priori*, as Dr. Clarke says * with a great deal of reason; and how *absolute necessity* is reconcilable with *absolute freedom* seems hard to conceive. For why should not this necessity extend to all the *operations*, the *wills*, the *decrees*, as well as the *existence* of the first cause; and take away that freedom of determination, that entire *liberty* of *indifference*, which our author has sufficiently proved †, to be a property of *God* himself, as well as *man*? and if we cannot admit it in the one case, why should we in the other? I don't say this *necessity* is inconsistent with perfect *freedom* as the former is an *imperfection*, since we do not conceive it to be such any farther than as it proceeds *ab extra*, from some superior cause *imposing* it; but this I say, that be it what you please, the very *nature* and *idea* of it seems repugnant to that of *freedom*, i. e. the *power* of *determining* in cases *absolutely indifferent*, without any previous reason, impulse, or necessity *whatsoever*; and consequently these two can never be *co-existent* in the *same cause*. He that considers this attentively will, I believe, find it to be more than a mere quibble on words‡.

(11.) Our author's way of reasoning here made use of to prove the real existence of both the divine being and his attributes merely from *our idea* of them, or from the various possibilities included in that idea, has been often applied to that purpose by the *Cartesians* and several of our own philosophers; but seems to be all begging the question: for it is not *supposing* any being to have all possible or conceivable perfections that infers *its* actual existence, but the *proving* it to have them.

* If a person having first proved the existence of a power that is perfect, and made it appear that a perfect power cannot but extend to whatever is a capable object of power, or includes not a contradiction; should proceed to prove that the *act* of *creation* implies no contradiction, and then at *last* should conclude that therefore *creation* is a possibility (i. e. effectible by the exercise of that perfect or almighty power, whose existence he had before demonstrated) I conceive there could be no reasonable exception against such a method of arguing. But if, on the contrary, he should say, I plainly perceive there's no contradiction in the supposition

* *Demonst.* p. 52. 5th edit.

† Chap. 5. § 1. Subf. 4. and elsewhere.

‡ See R. e. and note 43.

VI. *Fourthly*, Since *space* is conceived as merely idle and indifferent with respect to *repletion* or *vacuity*; since the *matter* which fills space is in like manner merely passive and indifferent with respect to *motion* and *rest*; it follows that the
cause

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of the creation, or production of a thing that was not, and should from thence immediately infer that a power capable of creation exists, this would be a very preposterous way of demonstrating; which yet is the same method with the present argument §.

Others endeavour to prove the *existence* of God from our *idea* of him after this manner. Whatever we have an *idea* of, that either *is*, or if it be not, it is *possible* for it to be; but we have an *idea* of an *eternal* and *necessarily existent being*; therefore, such a being either *is*, or it is *possible* for it to be. But if such a being either now *is not*, or once *was not*, or ever will *not actually be*, it would not be *possible* for it to be at all (except it could make itself, or be made by nothing) contrary to the former part of the supposition: nor would it be either *eternal*, or *necessarily existent*, contrary to the latter. Therefore such a being now *is*, and always *was*, and ever will be.

Now to make this or the like an argument properly speaking, *a priori*, it must be clearly proved that we have such an *idea* of a *necessarily existent being* as will infer its actual existence; (which may perhaps appear something doubtful from remark e.) and also, that this *idea* is *strictly innate*, or *connate* with us, and consequently capable of being urged *a priori*, for a proof of the existence of some being corresponding to such an *idea*; (which is now generally given up.) For if this *idea* be only gathered *a posteriori*, viz. by a deduction of arguments from our own existence, then it is only a consequence of these arguments, and cannot itself be alledged as a distinct one. For how can any *idea* consequent upon some certain proofs of something *a posteriori*, be an antecedent, independent proof of the same thing *a priori*? Besides, either these arguments are enough to convince any man of the existence and perfections of God, or they are not; if they *are*, this is *unnecessary*; if they *are not*, this is *insufficient*; nay, it is *none at all*, since 'tis a bare consequence of these, and entirely founded in them, and therefore must stand or fall with them. It is submitted to the reader whether the famous arguments drawn from our *ideas* of *eternity*, *infinity*, &c. be not of the same kind with the foregoing. Those that have a mind to be farther acquainted with the proofs of a Deity drawn from the *idea*, may find the question fully discussed in *Cudworth*, p. 721, &c. or in *Fiddes's Theol. Spec.* B. 1. P. 1. C. 9. or in the *Impartial Enquiry* into the Existence of God. B. 2. Part 1. See also *Parker. Disput.* VI. sect. 19, 20, 24. or *Ode. Theol. Nat.* p. 26, 31, &c.

¶ *Impartial Enquiry*, p. 178.

cause which fills space with matter, is perfectly *free*; so that the creation and motion of matter must be the works of free choice, and not necessity in the agent. For, if the agent effected these by necessity, they would also be necessary effects, and could not be conceived to be in themselves indifferent to existence or non-existence, as proceeding from a necessary cause.*

VII. *Fifthly*, Tho' by our outward senses, and the notices which they convey to us, we cannot go beyond *space, matter, motion, sensible qualities*, and this *active principle* which we are speaking of; yet, if we inspect our own minds, we may contemplate a *self-conscious* and *thinking principle* within us, whose actions are to *will, refuse, doubt, reason, affirm and deny*, which carry nothing of extension along with them, nor necessarily include it in them, nor have any relation to *place or space*; but are entirely abstracted from the notions of *external or internal*. That there is such a principle in us we are certain, not only from our senses, or the impulses of external objects, but also from reflection and self-consciousness. 'Tis to be observed farther, that we can at our pleasure move some parts of matter, and shake the limbs of our body by thought only, that is, by volition †, whence it appears, that motion may be produced in matter by thought; and that something of this kind is to be attributed to the first cause, in order to put matter into motion, nay,

That it is
a conscious
intelligent
being, and
omniscient.

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to

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* For an excellent illustration of this argument, see Dr. Clarke's *demonstr.* p. 24, 25, 26. and 65, 66, 67. 5th edit. See also Cudworth, p. 667, &c. and the *Impartial Enquiry*, p. 31, 32, &c.

† That *volition* and *action* are perfectly distinct, and must proceed from two different powers, See note 42. That *action* alia is two-fold, See not 43.

to bring it into being. *Cogitation* also, *will* and *consciousness*, or faculties equivalent to these, are necessary to a *free* cause, and on that account to be attributed to the first cause, being (as shall be shewn below) perfectly free; which cause, since it is infinite (as we have proved) in its essence and power, it must be so likewise in *intelligence*, viz. *omnipotent* and *omniscient*.

That he
acts for an
end.

VIII. *Sixthly*, Since this principle (which we call *God*) is the cause of all things, and infinite in *knowledge* as well as *power*, it follows that he acts, not by blind impulse, but *for an end*; and has ordered his works by such wisdom, as to be consistent with themselves, and not destructive of each other.

That the
end of
creation
was to ex-
ercise the
power,
and to
communi-
cate the
goodness
of the
Deity.

IX. *Seventhly*, Since God is perfect in himself, since all things subsist by his providence, and stand in need of him, but he of none; and since he can neither be profited nor incommoded by his works, nor affected by their good or evil; it follows that he made these things for no advantage of his own, and that he neither receives nor expects any benefit from them. For by creating things without himself, he must necessarily have sought either their benefit or his own; but what benefit can God seek for himself, who possesses all good? That certainly which was wanting to him, and necessarily must be wanting to a being even absolutely perfect, till he has created something; I mean the exercise of his attributes *without*, the communicating of his power and goodness: that therefore only must he be supposed to have sought in the creation and disposal of his works. (12. Not that *externals* can add any thing

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(12.) Some have objected here, that according to this notion,

thing to God, for they have no manner of proportion to his *power* or *nature*; but he has in himself the adequate exercise of his power, namely in the contemplation and love of himself. Externals therefore can neither encrease or diminish the *exercise* of his powers, which before was *infinite*. God is indifferent therefore as to these, nor does his exercise *without* please him, otherwise than as he has chosen to exercise himself thus; as will be shewn

H 3 be
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tion, there must have been a time before the existence of any created Beings, when God was neither infinitely *happy*, nor absolutely *good* *. But the one part of this objection evidently arises from a mistake of our author's notion, who has often told us, that he does not suppose any thing external to the Deity, to *add* the least to his own happiness, or essential perfections; (and indeed to think otherwise, would be worse than to imagine the fountain fed by its own streams; or the sun enlightened by its own rays) but only to *manifest* them to us his creatures, and encrease *our* happiness and perfection, by our *knowledge* and *imitation* of them. The *other* part cannot be of force against Creation in any *particular* time, because it will hold equally against it in *all* times; against the very possibility of creation in general: since with God there is no *prior* and *posterior*, no difference of time applicable to his existence, as we have endeavoured to prove in R. c. Besides, is it not absurd to talk of *time*, before the beginning of things, which (as we have shewn in the same place) can only be conceived as *co-existent* with, or rather *consequential* to the being of these things? 'Tis in vain therefore to ask, why were not beings created *sooner*? Since no part of time can ever be assigned when some were not created, and every period of time has equal relation to eternity. 'As to the second sense of the question (says *Cudworth*) why the world though it could not possibly be from eternity, yet was no sooner, but so lately made? We say that this is an *absurd question*, both because time was made together with the *world*, and there was no *sooner* or *later* before *time*: and also, because what-soever had a beginning, must of necessity be once but a *day* old. Wherefore the world could not possibly have been so made by God in time, as not be once but *five* or *six thousand* years old and no more, as now it is," p. 387. See the same more at large in *Fides's Theo. Spec.* B. 3. Part 1. Chap. 2. and in *Bentley's Boyle's Lect.* p. 232, 235, 5th edit. or *Jenkin's Reasonableness of Christianity.* Vol. 2. C. 9. or *Sir M. Hale's Prim. Originat. of Mankind.* S. 1. C. 6. Where you have all the absurd queries of that kind solidly and acutely answered.

* See Bp. Pearson on the Creed, 2d ed p. 62, 63.

below*. And hence it manifestly follows that the world is as well as it could be made by infinite *power* and *goodness*. For since the exercise of the divine power, and the communication of his goodness, are the ends for which the world was framed, there is no doubt but God has attained these ends.

When the world is said to be created for God's glory, 'tis after the manner of men.

X, I know 'tis commonly said, that the world was made for the *glory of God*: But this is *after the manner of men*. For *desire of glory*, is attributed to God in the same manner as *anger, love, revenge, eyes and hands* (A). When therefore the scripture teaches us, that the world was created for the glory of God, 'tis to be understood that the divine attributes, namely *power, goodness and wisdom*, shine forth as clearly in his works, as if he had no other intent in making them beside the

often-

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* See chap. 5. § 1. subf. 4.

(A) We see many things are ascribed to God in Scripture by way of *accommodation*; as hands and feet, heart, anger, revenge, and repentance. And since we understand all these to be spoken of him by way of condescension to our capacity, why should we not understand the *desire of glory* to be ascribed to him in the same way? especially since we must conceive God to be obliged by his goodness to set a great value on his *glory*, and to require the promoting of it from us as a principal duty. For the good and advantage of all reasonable creatures depends on the obedience that is paid to God's law; and there cannot be a more effectual means to promote that obedience than a due sense of the great and glorious attributes of God; of his wisdom, power, justice, and goodness. The more lively these are represented to intelligent beings, the more willing and careful they will be to obey God, and the more afraid to offend him; and therefore it is agreeable to the goodness of God to exact our endeavours to beget this apprehension in us and all other thinking beings. Not for any advantage this glory brings to God; but because the reputation of the Lawgiver and Governor of the world is a means necessary to advance the good of his creatures, and therefore it is our duty and interest in the highest degree to promote that glory: and therefore God may be said to do all things for his *glory*, because if that were the end of all that he has done, he could not be more concerned for it, nor would it be more our duty to promote it.

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ostentation of these attributes ; nor could they have answered that end more fitly if they had been designed for *glory* : but strictly speaking, the power of God is infinite, and when he acts for the good of his creatures according to that infinite *power*, he is *infinitely good*. Infinite knows no bounds, nor has the goodness of God any other bounds beside his *wisdom* and *power*, which are also infinite. And in reality this makes most for the *glory of God*, viz. to have created a world with the greatest *goodness*. (13.)

XI. By *good* I here understand that which is *convenient* and *commodious*, that which is *correspondent* to the *appetite* of every creature. God therefore created the world with as great convenience and fitness, with as great congruity to the appetites of things, as could be effected by infinite *power*, *wisdom*, and *goodness*. If then any thing inconvenient or in-

That God made the world as well as it could be made by the highest power, goodness and wisdom.

NOTES.

(13.) * The reason why God made the world (says the learned author so often cited above) was from his own overflowing and communicative goodness ; that there might be other beings also happy beside himself, and enjoy themselves. And afterwards, * God did not make the world merely to ostentate his skill and power, but to communicate his goodness, which is chiefly and properly his glory, as the light and splendor of the sun is the glory of it *.

We have a fine paragraph or two to the same purpose in *Wolstenholme's defin. of Rel. of Nat.* p. 115.—120.

The same notion is well stated in *Scol's Christian Life* ; where the glory of God and the happiness of men are shewn to be co incident †. As this seems to be very often misunderstood, it may not be improper to insert a passage or two from that author. * † A true survey and inspection of God's nature will instruct us, that being *infinitely perfect*, as he is, he must be *infinitely happy* within himself ; and so can design no self end without himself ; and consequently that the end for which he requires our service, is not to any advantage he expects to reap from it, or farther addition to his own happiness, he being from all eternity *past*, as completely happy as he can be to all eternity *to come* ; and therefore what other end can he be supposed to aim at, than our good

* *Intell. System*, p. 886.

† See vol. 1. p. 4. 5.

‡ Vol. 2. chap. 6. p. 434. 435.

commodious be now or was from the beginning in it, that certainly could not be hindered

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‘ and happiness? It is true indeed, he designs to glorify *himself* in our happiness; but how? not to render himself *more* glorious by it than he is in himself, for it is impossible; but to *display*, and *show forth* his own essential glory to all that are capable of *admiring* and *imitating* him, that thereby he might invite them to *transcribe* that goodness of his into their nature, of which his glory is the *spring* and *lustre*, and thereby to glorify *themselves*; and what can more effectually display the glory of a being who is infinitely *wise* and *powerful*, and *good*, than to *contrive* and *effect* the happiness of his rational creatures, who, of all others, have the most ample capacity of happiness?

And again: ‘ * But doth not the scripture tell us, *that he doth all things for his own glory*, and that he obtains this end, as well by *punishing*, as by *rewarding* his creatures? Very true, but then it is to be considered that the glory he aims at, consists not in receiving any good from us, but in doing and communicating all good to us. For infinite goodness can no *otherwise* be glorified, than by its own overflowings and free communications, and it can no otherwise be glorified in the punishment of its creatures, but only as it doth good by it: for should it punish without good reason, it would reproach and vilify itself: but if it doth it for good reason, it must be because it is good either for *itself* or *others*: for *itself* it cannot be; for how can an infinitely happy being reap any good from *another’s* misery? And therefore it must be for the good of others, either to *reduce* those who are punished, or to warn *others* by their example from running away from their duty and happiness. So that to do good is the end of God’s punishment: and because it is so, he is glorified by it: and considering that he is so infinitely happy, that he can no ways serve himself by our miseries, it is impossible he should have any other end in concerning *himself* about us, but only the *great, god like* one of doing us good, and making us happy.” See also disc. 14 in the same vol. p. 302.

To the same purpose is *Smith’s* excellent discourse of the existence and nature of God, chap. 4. and 7.† And *d’Oly’s* first dissertation, p. 122. and *Rymer’s* general representation of Rev. Rel. p. 260,—267. and p. 511. Bp. *Russ’s* remains 1st disc. and Bp. *Burnet’s* exposition of the articles, p. 27. 4th edit. and our author’s sermon on divine predestination, &c. § 33. For a sufficient answer to the objection drawn from Prov. 16. 4. see *Tillotson’s* 2d vol. of sermons, fol. p. 681. But there is less occasion for referring to a variety of authors on these subjects, since they have received such a clear and ample explanation from the writings of the late Mr. *Tucker*. Light of Nature pursued.

* Vol. 2. p. 204. fol.

† See select discourses, p. 136. and 147, and 393.

ed or removed even by infinite power, wisdom and goodness. (14.)

NOTES.

(14.) Our *author* rightly concludes from the *nature* and *will* of God, as discovered above, that nothing can be made by him (by whom are all things made) really unworthy of, or inconsistent with these; however unaccountable and irregular things may at present seem to us; for, having demonstrated the divine perfections in one sense *a priori*, i. e. prior to the examination of particular phenomena, no seeming difficulties or objections whatsoever *a posteriori*, i. e. from these phenomena, ought to invalidate the belief of them, but should be over-ruled by, and give way to these; except they amount to an equal degree of *clearness* and *certainly* with the proofs of these themselves; and also cannot possibly admit of any manner of *solution* consistent with them; neither of which cases can ever be made out, as will, I hope, appear from the following chapters of this book.

REMARKS referred to in Note 10.

[Remark 3.] **T**HAT this proposition must be allowed for *self-evident*, and as such, incapable of *proof*, appears from the *absurdities* which they all run into who attempt to prove their own existence from any other *medium*, viz. from any of their *operations*. 'I think, say they, therefore I am, i. e. I, who am, think; therefore I, who think, am. I being supposed to *exist*, do think, therefore this *thinking* proves that *existence*, Is not this plainly arguing in a *circle*, and *proving* a thing by *presupposing* it? And is it not full as clear to me first of all that I am, as that I think? though I could not be certain of my existence except I *perceived* something; yet surely the perception of my own existence must be both as *early* and as *evident* as any other perceptions. The first proposition therefore is *self-evident*. I begin with our own existence because we have *intuitive knowledge* of no other.

[R. b.] See the absurdity of this infinite series, as to generations, motion, number, magnitude, in the notes 3, and R. d. All or any of which arguments demonstrate the absurdity of it, as it is fairly and fully stated by *Greer* in his late *philosophy**. Where you see the true old *atheistic series* in a different dress from that in Dr. *Clarke's* 2d prop.

The same way of reasoning is made use of in a *philosophical essay towards an evictation of the Being and attributes of God*, by *Setb Ward*†. This piece being scarce as well as curious, an

* B. 6. c. 3. §. 8. p. 763. † 2d Edit. Oxf. 1655.

REMARKS.

‘ extract from it may not be disagreeable, ‘ That the world was not eternal, but created, is demonstrable from things that are visible: our argument shall be from generation. ‘ Whatsoever is begotten, was begotten of some other; for ‘ nothing can possibly beget or make itself, otherwise it will ‘ follow that the same thing is, and is not, both at one instant, seeing it is both the producer, and the thing to be ‘ produced. It is to be produced, and so it is not yet; it is ‘ likewise a producer, and that supposeth that it is in being: ‘ It is therefore in being, and it is not in being, that’s a manifest contradiction. Wherefore nothing can generate, make, ‘ or produce itself; wherefore every thing that is begotten, ‘ is begotten of some other, and then the other which begot it, ‘ either was itself in the same manner begotten, or it was not; ‘ if it was not, we are already come to the first principle, ‘ which was unbegotten; and so have discovered a godhead. ‘ If it was begotten, either we must follow up the course ‘ of successive generation to some first production from a cause ‘ eternal, or else we must necessarily say that the course of ‘ generations had no beginning, and consequently that infinite ‘ successions are already past, which is as much as to acknowledge that an infinite number of successions are past, and if ‘ past, then they are at an end; so we have found an infinite ‘ number which hath had an end, that is another contradiction. Again; if any shall affirm that the course of generation had no beginning, but that the number of them hath ‘ been infinite: let us put a case, and reason with him. We ‘ will imagine the generations of *Abraham*, for example, and ‘ *Joseph* the son of *Jacob* the son of *Isaac*, the son of *Abraham*. ‘ I demand therefore whether before the birth of *Abraham* there ‘ had past an infinite series of generations, or not? if the ‘ series was finite, the work of generation had beginning: ‘ which is the conclusion I contend for: if the series past was ‘ infinite; then at the birth of *Joseph*, ’tis evident that more generations were past, so we have found a number greater than ‘ that which was supposed to be infinite: and consequently that ‘ was not infinite; so that it was both infinite and not infinite, a ‘ manifest contradiction.

‘ But if we say that *Abraham*’s was infinite, and that so was ‘ *Joseph*’s, also, then it will follow that the number of *Abraham*’s ‘ was equal with the number of *Joseph*’s, but *Abraham*’s was ‘ but a part of *Joseph*’s, wherefore the part is equal to the ‘ whole. Else admit that *Abraham*’s was finite, but when it ‘ came to *Joseph*, that then the number was infinite, it follows ‘ then that a finite number added to a finite shall make an infinite, which likewise is against the common light of reason. We see therefore that the supposal of the eternity of the world, or the infinity of Generations, doth force the mind to contradictions, and consequently the fiction is vain and utterly impossible. And as we have argued in the way of generation, so we may likewise in every thing where there is a motion, ‘ or mutation, that is, in all the parts of the visible world.

‘ The

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* The creation therefore of the world, from the visible things thereof, is manifest. *Q. E. D.**

And again †. ‘ Well, having concluded the creation and beginning of the world, we see it follows that thence we conclude the eternal power and god-head; that is, the eternity and power of the god-head. As for eternity we have by undeniable consequence resolved all motions in the world into the bosom of a first-mover, and if we suppose him a first-mover, the supposition will evidently conclude that he is eternal, *i. e.* that he is without beginning of essence, or without any term or limit of duration. For if it had any beginning or essence of duration, that beginning of being presupposeth a priority of not-being, (that is, actual being is not of the essence of it) and so that we may, without any contradiction, suppose it not to be yet in being; that is, we may bring our understandings, without error, to the apprehension of it as being yet in the state of power only, or potential being, so as things are in their causes. So then, let us conceit it in this state, and compare this state with the other when it had being; and it is evident that this passage, or transition from want of being to a being, cannot be without a motion, nor motion without an actual mover: but that which moves a thing from not-being to a state of being, is necessarily a precedent mover to that which from it receives its being: so then that which is supposed to be the first original mover will have a mover, which shall of necessity have gone before it, and consequently it will be both a first and not a first mover, which is a plain contradiction. Instead of multiplying arguments without necessity, we will only return by the footsteps of our analysis, and so from the being of the first mover conclude the eternity. If it be a first mover, then it had no former mover; and if so, then it never was produced from nothing into being; and if so, then it never had any beginning of its being, then it is eternal. Therefore whatsoever is the first mover, it must of necessity likewise be eternal: but from the common affections of things visible, we did before demonstrate an original and first mover: wherefore the visible things of this world, they likewise do evince the eternity of the God, head ‡.

‘ And that God was a God of power, it was demonstrated when we found him to be the first cause and original mover and creator of the world ||.

[R. c.] The generally received notion of *eternity*, as consisting in a continual addibility of *successive duration*, is, I think, the very same thing as an *infinite series*, and consequently liable to the same objections: we must therefore try to rescue this divine attribute from such an absurd interpretation.

* P. 19.

† P. 22.

‡ P. 25.

|| P. 34.
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Now, if we attentively examine our *idea* of *eternity*, I believe we shall find that it amounts to thus much : *viz.* *uniform, invariable existence* : or *simple existence* joined with *necessity* : by which last word we only understand an *impossibility of having ever began, or of ever ceasing*. This I apprehend to be all that can consistently be affirmed of the divine existence in this respect, and perhaps we may more easily and safely determine what the manner of it is *not*, than what it is ; *v. g.* that it continues not by *time*, or in *place*. Indeed *local extension* and *successive duration* are modes of the existence of *molt beings*, and therefore we find it very difficult to consider any existence without them : but as we have endeavoured to shew the possibility of removing the *former* from the divine essence, in Notes 3, 6, and 7. so here, I think, it may be shewn also that the *latter* has no necessary connection with it, but the contrary.

In order to do this, it will be necessary to explain what we mean by *time*, which (according to Mr. *Locke*) is of the very same kind with *duration* ; and may properly be termed a *part* of it. This is very well defin'd by *Leibnitz*, to be the *order of succession of created beings*. We manifestly get the notion of it by reflecting on the succession of ideas in our minds, which we are apt to conceive as a chain drawn out in length, of which all the particular ideas are considered as the *links*. Whereas, had we but one *invariable perception*, without any such succession of ideas in our minds, we could have no such notion as this of *duration*, but that of *pure existence* only. Now *existence* being evidently a simple idea, (though perhaps *duration* be not) is consequently incapable of a definition, and we need, I think, only observe of it here, that if we join our idea of *duration* to it, we still add nothing to the idea of it as it is in *itself*, but merely a relation to *external things* ; which idea of *duration* therefore seems purely accidental to it, and no necessary ingredient of the former idea, which is complete without it. *Time* then, or *duration*, is an idea entirely resulting from our consideration of the existence of beings with reference to a real or imaginary *succession*. Whence it will follow in the *first* place, that we cannot possibly frame any idea of this kind of *duration* without taking in *succession* ; and secondly, that we cannot easily separate the *existence* of any finite, changeable beings from this kind of *duration*.

Our next enquiry must be whether this idea of *duration* be connected with the existence of those beings entirely as they *exist*, or only as they exist in such a *particular manner* : whether it belongs to all *existence*, as *existence*, or only to a particular sort of existence, *viz.* that which includes the forementioned relation to *succession*. The latter, I think, will appear more probable, when we reflect that it is only from the *variableness* and *contingency* of our own existence, that all our *succession* is arising. Whereas, were we entirely *independent*, we must be absolutely *immutable*, and invariable *permanent* ; and also that we can contemplate even this existence of ours without *succession*. *i. e.* we have a power of confining our thoughts and attending to one idea alone for some small time (if

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(if that word be excusable here) exclusive of all other ideas and consequently exclusive of succession. This Mr. Locke allows, being what he calls an *instant*, which, says he, 'is that which takes up the time only of one idea in our minds, without the succession of another, wherein therefore we perceive no succession at all*.'

Succession therefore does not appear to be necessarily joined with the idea of absolute existence, since we can consider *one* (for how small a time soever) *without*, and *independent* of the other. Nay, lastly, there is a certain existence to which it cannot possibly be in any sense applied, and that is a *perfect* one. Suppose this perfect being *alone* in nature, as we must believe him once to have been, and then what *change* of nature, or *succession* of ideas can be found? what *flux* of moments, what *alteration* or *increase* can we imagine in his own uniform, invariable essence? What idea have we of *duration* as applied to his existence, antecedent to his *willing* and *creating* external things? Such duration then as we are acquainted with, can, I humbly apprehend, have no manner of relation to this immutable being, while supposed to exist alone: but as soon as he determined to exercise his several attributes in the production of something without himself, then we have reason to think that *time*, *succession* and *increase* began. "Tho' the eternal being had no necessary succession in his own nature, yet being perfectly *self active* and *free*, thence it proceeded, that the exercise of his freedom in decreeing and producing the creatures, in such a manner and order as was judged fit by his most perfect wisdom, became the original of whatever real succession has been in nature, and such succession as we are apt to conceive to have *preceded*, is no other than *imaginary*."†

To the several objections against this notion drawn from God's eternal wisdom, ideas, decrees, &c. See a sufficient answer in the same place.

I shall transcribe this author's reply to the most common and considerable one about the *punctum flans*.

"Some will possibly object that if there was once no real succession in nature, it will follow that the divine existence was then at least (as is usually said to be) *instantaneous*. But to this it may be replied that existence is nothing, if distinguished from the being which exists. Consequently there can no real quantity belong to it as so distinguished. Wherefore it cannot properly be denominated either *finite*, or *infinite*, *successive* or *instantaneous*. For these are attributes which have a reference to *quantity*, and can no more agree to existence, which is but a *mode* of beings, than they can to necessity, or contingency, which are modes of existence. To define eternity or necessary existence by infinity or the negation of limits, seems to be no less impertinent, than to define virtue by the negation of *red* or *blue*. For existence (which has no quantity or dimensions) hath no more analogy

* Essay on H Und. B. 2. Ch. 14. §. 10.

† *Impart. Enquiry*, p. 208.

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"logy to extension and limits than virtue (which hath no colour) hath to red or blue. And for the same reason it is no less improper to define it to be *instantaneous*, since even an *instant* (as likewise an atom) is conceived as quantity, though the minutest imaginable. But if it cannot properly be denominated instantaneous, much less can it be successive."†

After all, it must be again confessed, that the idea of succession (as *Colliber* observes) so insinuates itself into our idea of existence, as is so closely connected with the existence of all finite beings, that we find it extremely difficult to imagine the eternal existence of God, any otherwise than as an eternal continued series or succession.

Our constant conversation with material objects makes it almost impossible for us to consider things abstracted from *time* and *place*, which (as was observed before) are modes of the existence of most things, and therefore we are apt rashly to apply these considerations to the great Author and preserver of all things. We seem to think that as the most exalted idea we can form of God's *eternity* and *omni presence* must be infinite *duration*, and unbounded *extension*, so these are to be strictly and positively attributed to him; whence must follow all the absurdities of *past* and *future*, extension in *this* and *that* place as compatible with the divine essence. Whereas *absolute positive infinity* (such as belongs to God*) does, in its very notion exclude the consideration of *parts*; since no addition of any parts whatsoever can amount, or in the least degree approach to it. (Though such negative infinity as belongs to all *quantity*, cannot possibly be considered otherwise.†) So that whosoever acknowledges God's perfections to be strictly *infinite*, does by that confession deny that they may be considered as made up of parts: that *immensity* can be composed of any *finite extensions*, or *eternity* consist of multiplied *durations*, and consequently, that there can be *length* or *space*, *distance* or *time*, *past* or *future*, with the *infinite and eternal God*‡. When therefore we say that God *always was*, or *ever will be*, we don't mean by these and the like words, that his existence has strictly any relation to times past or future, that it is at all increased, altered, or affected thereby: but only thus much is intended, *viz.* that whenever we suppose any other beings existing, or time and succession begun, then it was, is, or will be possible for these beings to affirm in any part of this their time or succession, that God *also exists*. In the same manner as it may be affirmed of some propositions that they always were and will be true, that they are true all the world over. Tho' such assertions are exceedingly improper, because propositions or necessary truths have no manner of relation to either time

† *Impartial Inquiry*, p. 210. See also *Episcopius* Inst. Theol. l. 4. c. 9. with *Cudworth*, *Intell. Syst.* p. 644, &c.

* See Note 3. and R. 1.

† See Note 3. and R. 1.

‡ See *Locke* on Hum. Und. B. 2: C. 25. § 12.

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time or place. All expressions therefore which imply succession, such as, *was, will be, always, when, &c.* as well as those that imply locality, such as *ubi, where, &c* † can only be applied to finite temporary things, which exist in time and place: with which things so existing, as well as every point of time and place, the Deity is supposed to be *co-existent*; though his own nature and essence be very different from these, and have properly no manner of relation to or connection with them. If then we will attribute *duration* to him, it must be *permanent, unsuccessive* duration, *i. e.* duration of a quite different *kind* from what we meet with here. But it is to be remembered that we don't pretend to explain the *nature* of eternity, or to determine the *manner* of such existence as excludes all *succession*; since it is sufficient for us here to shew the possibility of conceiving the thing in general, the certainty of it having been demonstrated already, when we proved that something must be *eternal*, having also shewn that eternity could not consist in successive duration.

If then the divine existence cannot include succession of parts, or our kind of duration (which perhaps by this time may not seem altogether improbable) neither can his *essential attributes*. His *knowledge*, *v. g.* can have no relation to times *past* or *future* to *fore* or *after*; nor can any object be said to be at a *distance* from it, or any imaginary distance set *bounds* to it.

The chief reason why we don't perceive and know any thing that has a real existence, is because that existence is removed from us by the distance of *time* or *place*; but this reason cannot hold with God, who is (though in a manner far different from his creatures) always *present* to all times and places, and consequently must behold all things existing therein, as well as we see any object at a due distance directly before us. Thus he that is travelling on a road cannot see those that come far behind, or are gone far before him; but he who from some *eminence* beholds the *whole* road from end to end, views at once all the distant travellers succeeding one another. But this, I think, is so evident in itself that neither argument or simile can make it more so. See *Martin's discourse* of nat. rel. part 1. c. 8. or note 76.

Hence then appears the impropriety of those terms, *divine prescience, predestination, &c.* which have so long puzzled the world to no manner of purpose; and the only conclusion at last must be, that all things which *ever were* or *will be*, which with respect to some former or latter times, and to persons placed therein may be called *past* or *future*, are always equally and at once *present* to the view of God; that to him strictly and absolutely a *thousand years* are as *one day*, and *one day* as a *thousand years*, and that whatever difficulties seem to attend this conception of things being *successive* to us, and not so to him, can be no argument against the matter itself, which is demonstrable; but only one of the many instances of the weakness of human understanding in things pertaining unto God.

Against

† See R. h.

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Against the common notion of *eternity*, see the *Spectator*, No. 590. or Sir M. Hale's, *Prim. Orig. of Mankind*. §. 1. c. 6. p. 123. or a *Philosophical Essay*, &c. by Seth Ward, p. 23. or Grew's *Cosm. Sa.* b. 1. c. 1. par. 9, or *Ode, Theol. Nat.* p. 220.

Both this attribute and omnipresence are also well treated of by J. Smith, in his discourse concerning the *existence and nature of God*, c. 2. § 4, 5. *Sele& disc.* p. 125, 126, &c. and by Dr. Martyn, *disc. of nat. Rel.* part 1. c. 7. and Sherlock on the Trinity, p. 76, &c.

[R. d.] ' Here we find certain *chains* of *causes* and *effects*, and many parts of this system owing their existence, and the manner of their existence, to a preceding cause, consequently we cannot, with any possibility of reason, assert that the *whole* system exists without a cause, for this is the same as to assert that the *parts* do not belong to the *whole*. Again, a material system composed of parts that are *changeable*, cannot exist without a cause distinct from, and *prior* to such a system. For wherever there is a *change*, there must be a *cause* of that change otherwise there would be a beginning without a *cause*. The cause of this change cannot be in the *materials* of this system for the very same reason; therefore it must be in something *distinct* from and *prior* to the system itself. The same will be the case as to *motion* in a material system; there is no motion but what is the effect of a *former* motion, consequently there is no motion in such a system which has been from *eternity*, or which has not been *caused*, &c.*

' From the *imperfection* also, or *unhappiness* which we see in this system, in *man* particularly; from the *frame* and *constitution* of it, 'tis evident that it did not exist without a cause.

' The question then will be, what is the cause of its existence? Now that cannot be in *itself*, for then a thing would be before it was, which is a contradiction. It follows then, that some other being is the cause of its existence, and the next question will be, *who* is this being? Now as whatever began to exist must owe its existence to some *preceding cause*, so that cause, if it has not existed eternally, must likewise owe its existence to some *other* preceding cause, and that to *another* and so on till we ascend to (the *first cause*, or to) a being that is *eternal*, and exists absolutely *without* cause. And that there is such a being is evident, otherwise, as nothing could begin to exist without a cause, so nothing that is not eternal could ever have existed †.

[R e] That the idea of *self existence* can imply nothing more than a *negation of dependence* on any cause; and that *necessity of existence* can only be considered as a consequence resulting from such independence seems very clear. A being which is the first of all causes, itself absolutely uncaused, cannot

* See Collier's *impartial enquiry*, p. 31, 32, &c.

† *Enquiry*, p. 11, 12, 18, &c. See also Dr. Bentley's *Boyle's Lect.* Sermon 6, p. 127, &c. 5th edit. and the other authors referred to in note 3.

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not have any thing in any manner of conception *prior* to it, or which may be considered as a positive *ground* of its existence. We can therefore only prove his existence *a posteriori* and argue from the manner of it in a *negative* way. See note 4. From the order of causes we gather that he must necessarily have been from all eternity, otherwise his existence would have arose from nothing; and that he must continue to all eternity, otherwise an end would be put to that existence by nothing. But this is still only a *consequential* necessity arising from the absurdity which would attend the contrary suppositions, and to infer any thing from hence concerning the *modus* of the Divine Being seems to be building a great deal more on this argument than it will bear. This is indeed a *reason* by which we find that he must always exist, but it is a reason to *us* only, and does not affect *his* own nature, or the cause of it, and when it is applied to that, I think 'tis used equivocally. Conceiving that he cannot possibly be supposed not to exist, is far from conceiving *how* or *why* he actually *does* exist; we can easily shew a reason for the one, but it seems above human comprehension to account in any respect for the other: nay, the attempt to do it seems altogether as absurd and useless, as endeavouring to shew how or why a thing is what it is; how a first cause is a first cause; or why truth is truth.

Farther: This *eternal Being*, we say, is *independent*; or, which is the same thing, *self-existent*, i. e. his existence depends upon nothing *beside* himself. But does it therefore positively depend *upon* himself? will it follow that because he has no *external* cause, therefore he must have an *internal* one? Or because no ground or reason of his existence can be drawn from any other substance, therefore one must be contained in his *own substance*, or *self*? This is using the word *self-existent* in two different senses, both as *negative* and *positive*, which have no manner of connection with each other, and the latter of which will perhaps appear to be no very good one. It is not then apparent yet that there needs any *physical reason* at all for the *existence* of the *eternal, independent Being*.

Nor, secondly, if there did, would *necessity of nature* usually assigned as such, serve for that purpose. For this necessity is not the *substance* itself, that would beto make the same thing the *ground* of itself. 'Tis therefore a *perfection, property* or *attribute* of that substance (we know no other distinction) and as such must, in the order of our ideas, be consequent upon the existence of that substance in which it is supposed to inhere. Let it then be an *attribute sui generis, cujuscuque generis* (if we mean any thing at all by this word) it must be *predicated of*, and *presuppose* its subject, and consequently cannot, according to the order of our ideas, be the antecedent *ground* or *foundation* of it. And to endeavour to clear it (as some do) by making it not an attribute of the *substance*, but of the *attribute* of the substance; or as they phrase it, a *property* of a *property*; is only thrusting it still farther back, and making it posterior in conception to both the substance and its attribute.

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But Thirdly, supposing this *necessity*, this *ground* or *reason* could be considered as *antecedent* to the Divine Nature, and inferring its *actual-existence*, we are but one step farther yet; for, will there not be the same necessity for demanding a *reason* for that reason, a *ground* for that ground, and so on in *infinitum*? and what shall we get by such an endless progression? why should we not stop at a first *Being*, as well as at this *ground*, which must itself want a foundation if the other does, since there cannot be any intuitive knowledge in either case; and the same reasons which are given for stopping at this *ground* will hold equally for stopping before we come at it, and convince us that we might as well, or perhaps better, acquiesce in the *actual-existence* of the first *Being*. We must then rest somewhere: we must either admit one first cause of all things and qualities itself existing without cause (for that is implied in its being termed the first) or an *infinite series* of beings existing without any original cause at all; i. e. either *some one* thing must be without a cause or *every thing*.

Here then are two difficulties; let us see which is the less. Now if the *manner of existence* in all these Beings were entirely the same, I grant it would be as easy to suppose *all* of them *existing* without a cause, as *one*. But here, I think, lies the difference: there was a time when all of them, except *one*, were indifferent to *existence* or *non-existence*; were nothing. Therefore for them that were once indifferent to *existence* or *non-existence*, to be actually determined into existence, to be brought from *nothing* into *something*, or made what they once were not; is a real *change*, an *action*, an *effect*; and as such, must require some *changer*, *agent*, *cause*. But on the other hand, all that we know of this *one* being, is, that it *now exists* and always did so; that it never had a *beginning* of its *existence*, was never changed from what it is, never *made* or produced: here is no *effect*, and therefore no *reason* nor room for a *ground* or *cause*. Nay, to assign one in any respect *prior* to its actual existence, as it must be supposed to be, if considered as the cause of it; I say, to assign any ground *prior* to the *existence* of this being, would be to prove this being *not eternal*, nor the *first cause*: as attempting to prove a *self-evident* proposition is endeavouring to shew that proposition not to be self-evident by assigning a *clearer*.

Now to lay down some *antecedent ground*, or *reason* of existence, must either be to propose it by way of *causality*, or to fix no idea at all to these words: and indeed, no one seems possible to be fixed to them, which is not utterly inconsistent with that other idea of existing without a cause, as this being is proved to exist. For why do we consider that *ground* or *reason* in the order of our ideas as *antecedent* to the existence of any being, otherwise than as it appears in the order of nature antecedently necessary to the existence of that being? Is this therefore applicable to the existence of the deity, to whom we allow, that no *thing*, *mode*, *quality* whatsoever can be really antecedent? The case will be no better if we make this necessity *co-etaneous* or *co-existent* with the existence of the being which is supported by

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by it; since this is to suppose *that* actually existing already, in order to the existence of which this *necessity* is introduced; and also seems much the same as an effect *co-existent* with its cause. For, as we said before, this *necessity* must either be a *cause*, or *nothing* at all to the present purpose. And that it was proposed as such by the author that introduced it, is I think pretty plain, from his terming it sometimes a *formal* cause, and sometimes one which *operates*.*

The whole case then seems to stand thus. On the one hand there is a certain *alteration* made, a positive *effect* produced without a *cause*; which is a clear contradiction. On the other hand there is a *difficulty* indeed, but not an apparent contradiction: there is somewhat existing of which we can give no *account* (the manner of whose *existence* is different from that of any thing else) which will admit of no *cause*, the idea of which is entirely repugnant to that of all *causality*.

This may be hard to conceive, but cannot be denied without affirming something worse, namely an express contradiction, as has been shewn above. In order to set this in as clear a light as is possible, I shall take the liberty to insert a passage from the learned writer cited in note 3. and 9. 'The idea of a self-existent being is the idea of a *being that always was, is, and will be*, because he always was, is, and will be infinitely *able* to be. If you ask why he is so, I know not; why I believe so, I think I know; it is because he has *in fact* existed from all eternity, which he could not have done, had he not been infinitely able to exist. If you ask after the ground or foundation of this *infinite ability*, it is the same that is the ground or foundation of all his other perfections, his infinite nature, essence, or substance; if you ask farther for the ground of *that*, I must call it trifling: if you assign *absolute necessity*, I must ask what's next? Or what that means? Or refer you to the *Indian philosopher's elephant and tortoise*, as the best comment upon *absolute, antecedent necessity*.'

Neither need we run ourselves into such absurdities as these: this independent being *exists because it does exist*; or, it exists by *chance*. Since it is enough for us to say, *there can be no assignable reason why it does exist*; or, which is the very same thing still, no cause, either *efficient* or *formal*; no causal necessity, or antecedent ground of its existence.

I shall only beg leave to observe one thing more in this place, namely, that all the abovementioned reasoning about *necessary existence* seems to be built upon that false maxim which *Leibnitz* lays down as the foundation of all philosophy (and which Dr. *Clarke* was very ready to grant him, since it was the foundation of his own book on the divine attributes) namely, that *nothing is without a reason, why it is rather than not, and why it is so rather than otherwise*. Though the Dr. is soon forced to deny this very principle, when (in his way of considering

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time

* See Dr. *Clarke's* answer to the 3d letter, p. 473. and answer to the 6th. p. 488. lines 1, 2, 35. Seventh ed.

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time and space) he proposes the *mere will of God*, as the only reason why the world was created at such a certain period of time, and in such a particular point of space.* Of which *divine will*, or of its determination, according to himself, there can be no conceivable manner of *reason*, since he supposes these effects of the divine will to be, in every possible manner of conception, absolutely *equal* and *indifferent*, and consequently it would be absurd to suppose any reason of such special *will*, or such particular *determination*. If then we may suppose two things in nature absolutely and in every respect *equal* (which *Leibnitz*, to be consistent with himself, and I believe for no sufficient reason else, found it necessary to deny) the preference of one of these before the other must be absolutely without a *reason*. And though there may be a sufficient reason for a person's *acting* in general, rather than not acting at all, yet (as *Leibnitz* well observes†) except there be one also for his acting in a certain *particular manner*, which in the present case there cannot be (according to Dr. *Clarke's* own confession‡) the abovementioned principle is entirely overthrown. See more of this in note 42. and the latter part of n. 45.

The same argument seems to hold against *Locke's hypothesis of anxiety*, if it be considered as the sole and absolute determiner to all action §, since it can never determine the *mind* to *will* one action before another, where both are entirely equal; of which kind numberless occur in life, as will be shewn at large in its proper place.

[R. f.] For a being to be *limited*, or *deficient* in any respect is to be *dependent* on some *other* being in that respect, which gave it just so much and no more §; consequently that being which received nothing from another, and which in *no* respect depends upon any other, is not limited or deficient at all. For though *figure*, *divisibility*, &c. and all manner of limitation, is in *one* sense (*viz.* in beings *essentially* imperfect) as Dr. *Clarke* observes §§, properly a mere *negation* or *defect*; yet in another, *viz.* in a being which is essentially perfect in any respect, finiteness must be conceived as a *positive effect* of some cause restraining it to a certain degree. In all beings capable of quantity, increase, &c. and consequently *uncapable* of *perfection*, or *absolute infinity*; limitation or *defect* is there a necessary consequence of *existence*, and only a *negation* of that perfection which is entirely incompatible with their *essence*; and therefore in these it requires no farther *cause*. But in a being naturally *capable* of *perfection* or *absolute infinity*, all *imperfection* or *finiteness*, as it does not necessarily flow from the *nature* of that being, it seems to require some *ground* or *reason*, which reason must therefore be foreign to it, and consequently is an effect of some *other*, external cause, and consequently cannot have place in the first cause. That this being is *capable* of perfection or absolute infinity, ap-

* 3d reply, No. 5. p. 81.

† 5th letter, No. 17. p. 169. ‡ No. 1, 3. p. 12. of his 4th reply. § See not 45. § See *Scott* in note 21 §§ *Dew.* p. 56, 57. 5th edit.

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pears, I think, from hence, that he is manifestly the subject of one infinite or perfect attribute, *viz.* eternity, or absolute invariable existence. His existence has been shewn to be perfect in this one respect, and therefore it may be perfect in every other also. Now that which is the subject of one infinite attribute or perfection, and *may* have others so too, *must* have all of them infinitely or in perfection: since, to have any perfections in a finite, limited manner when the subject and these attributes are both *capable of strict infinity*, would be the fore-mentioned absurdity of positive *limitation* without a limiter, or cause. This method of arguing, will prove any perfection to be in the deity *infinitely modo*, when we have once shewn that it belongs to him at all: at least, will shew that it is unreasonable for us to suppose it limited, when we can find no manner of ground for any limitation, which is as far as we need, or perhaps can go.

[R. g.] That the word *God* is generally understood in a relative sense, see *Newton. Princ. Schol. Gen. sub. fin.* p. 523. 3d edit. or *Maxwell's Appendix to Cumberland*, p. 106. or *Chambers* under the word *God*.

To shew that there is only *one* eternal self-existent being, which apparently bears the relation of God to us, seems to be going as far as either is necessary, or natural light will lead us. As Dr. *Clarke's* demonstration of this and several other attributes is entirely founded on his idea of *necessity* of existence, as that also is on *space, duration, &c.* they must stand or fall together. They who endeavour to deduce it from *independence*, or *omnipotence* evidently presuppose it in their definition of these attributes.

The foregoing passage and part of note 20, to which it refers, having been called in question by the author of *Calumny no Conviction*, (Mr. *Jackson*) or *a Vindication of the Plea for human Reason*, p. 58. &c. I shall here endeavour to explain them. *The phenomena of nature lead us up to one first cause, which is sufficient for their production, and therefore none else are necessary*; i. e. necessary to the production of these phenomena, according to the former sense of *necessity* laid down in p. 23. † and which is the only sense that word could be applied in here without equivocation. *And though several more independent beings might possibly exist, yet they would be no Gods to us; they would have no relation to us, nor owe any thing to do with them*; i. e. if the supposition of their existence were not requisite to the production of this system, we could perceive no necessity for it at all, we could never discover it by our reason, and therefore it would be nothing to us. And though more such beings should really exist and act in the formation, and government of their distinct systems, or agree in one; yet till their existence and operations were made known to us, and a natural relation between us discovered, nothing would be owing from us to them, they would have no religious or moral relation to us; we should have no reason to call any more than one of them *our* creator, pre-

* See note 3. and R. c. p. 65.

† 1st edit. p. 20.

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server, and governor, which sense the word *God* more especially bears, as this author will not deny.

Since the same reason holds for no more than one such, to suppose more than one is at least reasonable. By an unreasonable supposition here I mean a groundless one, or that which has no reason to support it, as the same word is used concerning *infinity*, p. 63.* *It is unreasonable for us to suppose it limited, when we can find no manner of ground for any limitation.* Such suppositions as these ought never to be built on in philosophy, but yet when they are advanced I should not think that my not seeing any reason for them is an effectual confutation of them. There may be many beings in nature that have no apparent relation to any thing that I know of, and consequently for or against whose existence I can find no sufficient reason. I should be glad therefore to see upon what this author grounds the following consequence which he adds, 'the same reason holds for no more than one, therefore there is but one':—If by the word reason he means a reason *a priori*, I must expect some better proof of it than we have hitherto been able to meet with, before I can admit it: and it was exclusively of any such that I asserted that they who endeavour to deduce the unity from independence or omnipotence, presuppose it in their definition of these attributes, which I think they do in the following manner. Having proved the existence of some first cause, which as such can depend upon no other cause for its being and perfections, and therefore must exist *alone*, or be originally *self-existent*; (all which is demonstrable, but does not shew us why there may not be twenty such first causes, all underived and so far independent) having got thus far in their proof of independence, they add another idea to it, and include an absolute independence in every respect, with an *exercise* of his several attributes on every being in nature; which supposes that there are no other beings of equal perfection with himself, but that he exists *alone*, or is *self-existent* in another sense of these words, which does not at all follow from the former. In like manner instead of defining Omnipotence to be power perfect in kind, which has no defect or mixture of weakness in it, or a power in God over every thing which he has produced, (which is enough for our purpose, and all perhaps that can be strictly demonstrated, but yet does not as strictly infer unity) they make it a power over every thing which exists beside himself, which again supposes that there are no beings of the same kind with himself, which I apprehend to be begging the question. If this author takes these two attributes in the larger sense, I should be obliged to him for a proof of them from any medium but that of *antecedent necessity*, which is a principle that may with equal reason be brought to prove any thing. I must confess that to me who am obliged to draw all my notions and arguments concerning the deity from his effects, it would be difficult to demonstrate against the supposition of more than one uncaused active beings governing in their several provinces, and each producing (not

* 1st edit.

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whatever was absolutely possible, or fit to be produced.¹⁰ but) what was possible or fit for him to produce; tho' I don't know any ground for such a supposition.

[R. h.] We cannot include any such notion in *omnipresence*, as makes the deity present in his simple essence to (i. e. co-extended, or co-expanded with) every point of the boundless immensity; † since this idea of *extension*, or expansion seems plainly inconsistent with that *simple essence*. ‡ Not that we suppose these attributes of *knowledge* and *power* acting separate from his essence; but we suppose his essence to have no more relation to the idea of *space*, *place*, *where*, &c. than either of these attributes has §.

Dr. Clarke's query, 'How can it be shewn upon any other principle than that of necessary existence, that his governing wisdom and power must be present in those boundless spaces where we know of no phenomena or effects to prove its existence?' || is well answered by *Episcopus*. I shall give it in his own words. 'Hoc (nempe deum esse extra mundum) non modo prorsus est ἀκατάληκτος, sed etiam valde absurdum; quia totum atque omne illud spatium quod extra hunc mundum esse dicitur, nihil omnino reale est, sed pure putè imaginarium, & prorsus nihilum; ut autem Deus esse dicatur in pure putè imaginario, & prorsus nihilo, per se absurdum est: quia esse in dicitur realium habitudinem aut denominationem ab eo in quo quid existit: realis autem habitudo & denominatio a nihilo, sive ab eo quod nihil reale est, accipi nullo modo potest. Dicere deum ibi habere intrinsicam & absolutam præsentiam qua in se ipso realiter existit est fingere præsentiam sine relatione aut denominatione ad id cui quid præsens esse dicitur, quod implicat contradictionem. Intrinsicam enim sive absolutam præsentiam, qua quid in se ipso realiter existit, non est præsentia in nihilo; sed mera essentia sive existentia extra nihilum. ||'

That a wise and powerful being knows and acts upon all parts of the universe is plain from effects, but to go beyond this into what is called *extramundane space*, and to prove the existence of knowledge and power where there is nothing to which they can be referred, nothing to be known or acted upon, is to us incomprehensible. And no less so to speak of the presence of these attributes, or of a being endowed with them, (viz. an immaterial, unextended one) to any point or part of extension; except it be metaphorically, as eternal truths are said to be the same in every time and place, &c. Though in reality they have no relation to either one or other, but are incommensurate to and of a nature quite different from both time and space, as we observed in R. c.

To argue that every substance which affects another must be present to it, from the old maxim that *nothing can act where it is not*, is still supposing that a spirit exists somewhere, or is cir-

* Vindication, p. 59. † Dr. Clarke's demonst. p. 47.

‡ See note 6. § See note 7. || Answer to the 7th letter.

p. 499. || Inst. Theol. L. 4. c. 13. p. 294.

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cumfcribed by some parts of *space*: 'tis confining its exiftence to one particular *mode*, concerning the *modality* of which we can only reafon negatively, *viz.* that it is not the fame as that of *matter*, or by way of *extenſion* in any ſenſe.

[R. i.] By the above mentioned *pleaſure* or *natural good*, I mean that pleaſure which every one feels in himſelf. By the *production* of it here I underſtand both the producing ſuch in himſelf, and alſo in others; to both which he is equally determined by his nature, though from different principles. To the former he is directed by ſelf love: to the latter by a certain diſintereſted benevolent affection; and that which determines him to approve this affection and the actions flowing from it is called his *moral ſenſe*. The former of theſe affections, as it implies increaſe of happineſs, is only applicable to finite, imperfect creatures: the latter may be common to us and the deity; who could have been determined to create us only by ſuch a diſintereſted benevolent affection as this is ſuppoſed to be. This is always approved by the moral ſenſe; though it may be doubted whether ſuch a ſenſe be confined entirely to it. See *Butler's Diſſert. on the Nature of Virtue*, p. 315.

The object of both theſe affections is *natural good*; and, I think, *moral good* may be allowed to conſiſt in the proſecution of either, or both of them together, ſo long as the former is in due ſubordination to the latter.

That all the notion we can poſſibly frame of *moral good* or *evil*, of *virtue* or *vice*, &c. conſiſts entirely in *promoting* this *natural good* or *evil* is ſufficiently confirmed by *Sherlock*. †
 'Whereas, ſays he, we diſtinguiſh between *moral* and *natural*
 'good and *evil*; the only difference between them is this, that
 'moral good and *evil* is in the *will* and *choice*, *natural good*
 'and *evil* is in the *nature of things*; that which is *good* or
 'hurtful to ourſelves or others, is *naturally good* or *evil*; to
 'love, to chufe, to do that which is *good* or *hurtful* to ourſelves
 'or others, is *morally good* or *evil*: or is the *good* or *evil* of
 'our *choice* or *actions*. If you will recolleſt yourſelves, you
 'will find that you have no other notion of *good* or *evil* but
 'this: when you ſay ſuch a man has done a very *good* or very
 'evil action, what do you mean by it? Do you not mean
 'that he has done ſomething very good or very hurtful to him-
 'ſelf or others? When you hear that any man has done *good*
 'or *evil*, is not the next queſtion, *what good* or *what hurt*
 'has he done? And do you not mean by this, *natural good*
 'or *evil*? Which is a plain evidence, that you judge of the
 'moral good or *evil* of actions, by the *natural good* or *evil*
 'which they do.' See more on this ſubject delivered in the
 ſame place with a force and perſpicuity peculiar to that author.
 And to the ſame purpoſe is *Turner's Diſcourſe of the Laws of*
Nature and the Reaſon of their Obligation.

This ſeems to be the ultimate *criterion* of that *ſtneſs*, *congru-ity*, *reaſonableneſs* and *relation of things*, ſo often repeated by

† On Judgment, p. 20 to 24.

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Some late writers, *without or beyond* which I can fix no meaning to these words. And this criterion should I think, have been more clearly and distinctly specified. For when you say any thing is *fit*; must we carry our enquiries no further? Is it not a very proper question, to ask, *for what is it fit? Fit, Congruous, &c.* as well as the word *necessary*, are mere relative terms (as we observed in note 4.) and evidently refer to some *end*, and what can the end be here but happiness? † These *relations, &c.* may perhaps in some tolerable sense be called *eternal and immutable*, because whenever you suppose a man in certain circumstances, such consequences and obligations did or will always certainly follow. ‡

What is now good for me in these circumstances and respects, will always be so in the same circumstances and respects, and can never be altered without altering the nature of things, or changing the present system; but we cannot imagine these *relations* therefore to be any real *entities*, or to have existed from all *eternity*, or to be antecedent to, or independent of the will of God himself; as some writers seem to have done, (see Mr. Hutcheson's Illustrat. § 2. p. 250, 251.) we cannot, I say, imagine them to be either strictly *eternal* or *independent* of the will of God, because they must necessarily presuppose a determination of that will, and are in truth only consequences of the existence of things proceeding from that determination.* Much less can we apprehend how these *relations, &c.* *Are to be chosen for their own sakes and intrinsic worth; or have a full obligatory power antecedent to any reward or punishment annexed either by natural consequence or positive appointment to the observance or neglect of them.*† Since the natural good or happiness consequent upon and connected with the observance of them, is to us their sole *criterion*, the *argument* and *indication* of their *worth*, the ground of all their *obligation*.

Farther, most authors who treat of the production of this *natural good or evil* in such a manner as to constitute right or wrong, moral good or evil, &c. appear either to equivocate in a double meaning of the words: *viz.* as they imply producing happiness either in *ourselves* alone, or in *others*, (which are two very different things, and should accordingly be always distinguished) or else to be deficient in pointing out a *rule*, and proving an *obligation* to it in the latter sense, *viz.* with respect to *others*.

Now, as the sum of our happiness depends upon the whole of our existence, that only can be a *complete* and *indispensable* obligation, which is equal and commensurate to the sum total of our happiness. Or, that being only can absolutely and effectually oblige us, who has it in his power to make our whole existence

‡ See an excellent piece entitled, *divine benevolence*; particularly, pages 35, 22, 30, 31, 32.

§ See Locke's essay, b. 4. c. 11. § 14. or Turner on the laws of nature, § 20. or note 52.

* See our author, c. 1. § 3. par. 9. and c. 5. § 1. pa. 28. &c. and note 52.

† Evid. of nat. and rev. rel. prop. 1. § 7. p. 218.

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istence happy or miserable; and of consequence, the Deity who alone has that power, must necessarily be taken into all schemes of morality, in order to super induce a full, adequate obligation, or such an one as will hold a: all times, and extend to every action; and an endeavour to exclude the consideration of his will, or to deduce all obligation from any principles independent of it, has, occasioned a very material defect in most of our modern systems.

[R. k.] That God must have the same judgment and approbation of this moral good, which all rational beings naturally have*; and that we must judge of the nature and perfections of the deity, only by that nature and those perfections which we derive from him, is, I think, very plain: I mean, that we must not endeavour to conceive the several attributes of God by *substituting* something in him of a *quite different kind, and totally diverse* from that which we find in ourselves, (as the author of the *procedure of human understanding* seems to declare, p. 138, and elsewhere) even though that could be in some respects similar and *analogous* to this: but we are to suppose somewhat of the very same kind and sort, the same qualities or properties in general, to be both in him and us, and then remove all manner of *defect or imperfection* which attends the particular *modus* or degree of their existence, as they are in us. Thus we ascribe to God all kinds of apparent perfection observable in his creatures, except such as argue at the same time imperfection (v. g. motion which necessarily implies limitation, or are inconsistent with some other and greater perfection, v. g. materiality, which excludes knowledge and liberty.†) We also remove from him all *want, dependence, alteration, uneasiness*, &c. In short, all that results either from simple finiteness, or from the mere union of two finite imperfect substances such as constitute man. And when we have thus applied every thing in every manner of existence which seems to imply perfection, and excluded every thing which implies or includes the contrary, we have got our idea of an absolutely perfect being, which we call God. 'Tis therefore attributing to God some real qualities of a certain determinate kind, (v. g. knowledge or power, goodness or truth) the nature of which qualities we do perceive, are directly conscious of, and *know*, which gives us an idea or conception of him, and a *proper* one too, and not imagining some others, we cannot tell of what sort, totally different in nature and kind from any that we ever did perceive or know; which would give us no idea at all of him, either proper or improper.

In like manner we frame a partial conception of a spirit in general (which we confessedly have) not by substituting some properties *different in kind* from those which we perceive in our own spirit; but by supposing the very same properties, *i. e.* in kind (*viz.* *thought and action*) to be also inherent in some other be-

* See *Scot's* *Christ. life*, part 2. c. 1. 1. 21, 22. 1st edit.

† See *Tillotson*, *Serm.* 76. 3d vol: fol. p. 569, &c. Dr. *J. Clarke* on moral evil, p. 95, &c. and *Scot's* *christian life*, part 2. 6. § 2. p. 447, &c. 1st edit.

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beings which we therefore call by the same names. Now this is (as far as it goes) true, real knowledge, and may be applied and argued on intelligibly: but the other would, I fear, take away all possibility of arguing about the several attributes or properties of the Deity from those of ourselves; all reasonings upon them would be precarious, and without any solid foundation in the nature of things. Such analogical knowledge then as that, is, (according to my notions of knowledge) strictly and properly none at all; and if the author uses *analogy*, in that sense 'twill, I believe, be still taken only for a sort or degree of *metaphor*, after all he has said in the last chapter of his first book, to distinguish them.

I would here be understood to affirm thus much of the simple nature only, or *kind*, or our *abstract idea* of these qualities themselves, and not of the manner of their existence: which two (though this author uses them promiscuously in p. 84. &c.) seem yet very distinct considerations. For we apprehend several properties, or qualities, as existing in our own nature, independent of any particular manner; nay, in very *different manners*: v. g. knowledge, either by sensation or reflection, by deduction or immediate intuition: love attended with a certain degree of pleasure or pain, &c. and therefore we suppose that these qualities may exist in the divine nature in a manner different from what they do in us, and yet be the very same qualities still: which *modus* of the divine being, or of any of his attributes, is totally unknown to us, and we can only guess at it by some distant resemblance or *analogy*; which analogy I would therefore apply to this *modus* of existence, and to this only; which seems sufficient for all the great purposes of religion, and in which sense the notion is just and useful, but cannot, I think, be extended to our idea of the *whole nature* and *genus* of the attribute itself. Against this notion of *analogy* as applied to the *whole nature* of the attributes of God, see Fiddes's *Body of Div. b. 1. part 2. c. 13.* and his *Praef. Disc. fol. p. 234. &c.* or, J. Clarke on *Moral Evil*, p. 95, &c. or Chubb's *Traits*, p. 146, &c. or, *the present State of the Republic of Letters* for July 1728, or, *a Vindication of the Divine Attributes*, by Dr. Edwards. See also the *Minute Philosopher*, v. 1. p. 247.

[K. 1.] By the words, *infinite degree*, here and above, we don't mean any *indefinite addition*, or encreasableness of these several attributes partially considered (to which such terms are vulgarly, tho' not properly applied) but only an entire absolute *perfection*, without any kind of *failure* or *deficiency* in these respects: which we have intimated in note 3. * and elsewhere, to be our notion of infinity as apply'd to any of the divine attributes. ' Thus infinite *understanding* and *knowledge* is nothing else but *perfect knowledge*, that which hath no defect or mixture of *ignorance* in it, or the knowledge of whatsoever is knowable. *Ignorance* is nothing

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‘ else but *perfect* power, that which hath no defect or mixture of *impotency* in it : a power of producing and doing all whatsoever is *possible*, i. e. whatsoever is *conceivable*, and so of the rest.

‘ Now, that we have an idea or conception of *perfection* or a *perfect being*, is evident from the notion that we have of *imperfection*, so familiar to us : *perfection* being the *rule* and *measure* of *imperfection*, and not *imperfection* of *perfection*, as a *straight line* is the *rule* and *measure* of a *crooked*, and not a *crooked* of a *straight*. So that perfection is first *conceivable* in order of nature, before *imperfection*, as *light* before *darkness*, a *positive* before the *privation* or *defect*. For perfection is not properly the want of imperfection, but *imperfection* of perfection.

‘ Moreover, we perceive several degrees of perfection in the essences of things, and consequently a *scale* or *ladder* of perfections in nature, one above another, as of *living* and *animate* things above *senseless*, and *inanimate* ; of *rational* things above *sensitive* ; and that by reason of that *notion* or *idea* which we first have of that which is *absolutely perfect*, as the standard, by comparing of things with which, and measuring of them, we take notice of their approaching more or less near thereto. Nor indeed could these gradual *ascents* be *infinite*, or without end, but they must come at last to that which is absolutely perfect, as the top of them all. Lastly, we could not perceive imperfection in the most perfect of those things which we ever had sense or experience of in our lives, had we not a *notion* or *idea* of that which is *absolutely perfect*, which secretly comparing the same with, we perceive it to come short thereof †.

‘ Wherefore, since *infinite* is the same with *absolutely perfect*, we having a notion or idea of the latter, must needs have of the former. From whence we learn also, that though the word *infinite* be in the form thereof *negative*, yet is the sense of it, in these things which are really capable of the same, *positive*, it being all one with *absolutely perfect* : as likewise the sense of the word *finite* is *negative*, it being the same with *imperfect*. So that *finite* is properly the *negation* of *infinite*, as that which in order of nature is before it, and not *infinite* the *negation* of *finite*. However, in these things which are capable of no true *infinity*, because they are essentially *finite*, as *number*, *corporeal magnitude*, and *time* ; *infinity* being there a mere *imaginary* thing, and a non-entity, it can only be conceived by the *negation* of *finite*, as we also conceive *nothing* by the *negation* of *something*, that is, we can have no *positive* conception at all thereof. ‡

Now, all this is not attempting to make the attributes of God *positively infinite* by superadding a *negative idea* of *infinity* to them : (as the author of the *Procedure* urges against Mr.

† Cudworth, p. 648.

‡ Ib. 649.

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Locke, in b. 1. c. 3. p. 82. and the same might with equal justice be objected to Dr. Clarke, when he applies *infinite space* and *infinite duration* to the deity, and calls one his *immensity* and the other his *eternity*.) But it is making them positively and absolutely *perfect*, by first proving them to have some *real existence* in the divine nature, and then by removing from it all possibility of *want*, or *deficiency*, *mixture*, or *allay*, as explained in the last remark.

[R. m.] By the word *justice*, as it relates to punishment, we mean the *exercise of a right*, or doing what a person has a *moral power* to do. *Mercy* implies his receding from that right, or not exerting that moral power. When we apply these terms to the Deity, we consider his dispensations in a partial view, *viz.* only with relation to the person offending, and himself the offended; or as mere debtor and creditor, exclusive of all other beings, who may be affected thereby, and whom therefore we should suppose to be regarded in these dispensations. In this sense these two attributes have a distinct meaning, and may both be always subordinate to *goodness*, but can never be repugnant to each other. Thus, where a creature has forfeited its right to a favour, or incurred a penalty, by the breach of some covenant, or the transgression of some law, the creator, considered with respect to that being alone, and in those circumstances, has always a right to withdraw the favour, or to inflict the penalty; and will prosecute that right, whenever he finds it necessary to some farther end: but yet his goodness may incline him often to suspend or remit it on some foreign motive, *viz.* on account of the present relation between the criminal and other men, in very different circumstances, or in view of a future alteration in the circumstances of the criminal himself. Now as these motives belong to, and are generally known by God alone, though they may influence his actions towards us, yet they don't at all affect his right over us, and therefore ought not to diminish our love, gratitude, &c. to him in any particular instance either of judgment or of mercy. Whenever we suffer for our crimes, we have no reason to complain of any Injury, nor can he, when upon the forementioned motives he forgives us, ever injure himself. For justice, considered barely as a *right* or *moral power*, evidently *demand*s nothing, nor can properly be said to *oblige* one way, or other: and therefore the being thus possessed of it is at liberty either to suspend or exert it; but he will never use this liberty otherwise than as his *goodness* requires, consequently *justice* and *mercy* in such a being can never clash.

Whether

R E M A R K S.

Whether this way of conceiving these divine attributes be not attended with less difficulty than the common manner of treating them under the notion of two infinities *diametrically opposite*, to each other, must be left to the judgement of the reader.

C H A P.

C H A P. II.

Concerning the Nature and Division of Evil, and the Difficulty of tracing its Origin.

GOOD and *evil* are opposites, and arise from the relation which things have to each other : for since there are some things which profit, and others which prejudice one another ; since some things agree, and others disagree ; as we call the former good, so we stile the latter evil. Whatever therefore is *incommodious* or *inconvenient* to itself, or to any thing else ; whatever becomes *troublesome*, or frustrates any *appetite* implanted by God ; whatever forces any person to do or suffer what he would not, that is *evil*.

By evil we understand what soever is *incommodious*, *inconvenient* or *troublesome*.

II. Now these inconveniencies appear to be of three kinds, those of *imperfection*, *natural* and *moral* ones. By the evil of *imperfection* I understand the absence of those perfections or advantages which exist elsewhere, or in other beings : by *natural* evil, pains and uneasinesses, inconveniencies and disappointment of appetites, arising from natural motions : by *moral*, vicious elections, that is, such as are hurtful to ourselves, or others.

Evils are of three kinds, those of *imperfection*, *natural* and *moral*.

III. These

The difficulty is how these come into the work of a God of the highest goodness and power.

III. These evils must be considered particularly, and we are to shew how they may be reconciled with the government of an infinitely powerful and beneficent Author of nature. For since there is such a being 'tis asked, as we said before, whence come evils? whence so many *inconveniencies* in the work of a most good, most powerful God? whence that perpetual war between the very *elements*, between *animals*, between *men*? whence *errors*, *miseries* and *vices*, the constant companions of human life from its infancy? whence good to evil men, evil to the good? If we behold any thing irregular in the works of men, if any machine answer not the end it was made for, if we find something in it repugnant to itself or others, we attribute that to the ignorance, impotence, or malice of the workman; but since these qualities have no place in God, how come they to have place in any thing? Or, why does God suffer his works to be deformed by them?

Some that were unable to solve this difficulty have denied the existence of a God, others have supposed a double one.

IV. This question has appeared so intricate and difficult, that some finding themselves unequal to the solution of it, have denied, either that there is any God at all, or at least, any author or governor of the world: thus *Epicurus*, and his adherents: nor does *Lucretius* bring any other reason for his denying the *system of the world to be the effect of a deity*, than that it is so very faulty.* Others judged it to be more agreeable to reason to assign a double cause of things, than none at all. Since it is the greatest absurdity in nature to admit of actions and effects, without any agent and cause. These then perceiving
a mix-

a mixture of good and evil, and being fully persuaded that so many confusions and inconsistencies could not proceed from a good being, supposed a malevolent *principle*, or God, directly contrary to the good one; and thence derived corruption and death, diseases, griefs, miseries, frauds and villainies; from the good being nothing but good: nor did they imagine that contrariety and mischief could have any other origin than an evil principle. This opinion was held by many of the ancients, by the *manicheans*, *paucicians*, and almost all the tribe of antient *heretics*. (15.)

K

V. And

NOTES.

(15.) A large and elaborate account of this opinion in its various shapes, may be seen in *Bayle's* dictionary under the article *manichees*, *sem. d.*

A farther explanation and defence of it occurs in the same book under the several titles specified below, note 17. But after all the pains taken by that ingenious author to support such a wild hypothesis, both the inconsistency and the futility of it will soon appear. For if the maintainers of an absolutely evil principle hold, as some of them seem to assert, that such principle is in every respect, material as well as moral, entirely opposite to the good one, who enjoys all imaginable perfection, it must be infinitely imperfect, and consequently unable to make head against the good and perfect one, or to obstruct any of his operations.

But supposing these men only to mean by this evil principle, an absolutely *malevolent* being of equal power, and other natural perfections with those of the good one. 'It would be to no purpose (says abp. *Tillotson*, *) to suppose two such opposite principles.—For admit that a being infinitely mischievous, were infinitely cunning, and infinitely powerful, yet it could do no evil, because the opposite principle of infinite goodness being also infinitely wise and powerful, they would tie up one another's hands: so that upon this supposition, the notion of a deity would signify just nothing, and by virtue of the eternal opposition and equality of these principles, they would keep one another at a perpetual bay, and being an equal match for one another, instead of being two deities, they would be two idols able to do neither good nor evil.'

More of this may be seen in *Bayle's* explanation concerning the *manichees* at the end of his dictionary, p. 66, &c. See also *Gordon's Bayle's Lectures*, *serm. 5.* or *Stillingfleet's, Orig. b. 3. c. 3. § 10, 12.* or *Sherlock on judgment*, 1st edit. pag. 173.

a. Vol. of *Serm.* fol. p. 690.

Neither

There are some who are of opinion that it is unanswerable, and that the *manichees* offered a better solution, by supposing two principles, than the *catholics* do by owning only one.

V. And there are some who still think this difficulty unanswerable. They confess, indeed, the supposition of a double principle to be absurd, and that it may be demonstrated that there is but one author of all things, absolutely perfect and good : yet there is evil in things, this they see and feel : but whence, or how it comes, they are entirely ignorant ; nor can human reason (if we believe them) in any measure discover. Hence they take occasion to lament our unhappiness, and complain of the hard fate attending truth, as often as a solution of this difficulty is attempted unsuccessfully. The *manicheans* solve the phenomena of things a hundred times better (as these men think) with their most absurd hypothesis of two principles, than the Catholics do with their most true doctrine of one perfect, absolutely powerful and beneficent author of nature. For the *manicheans* acquit God of all manner of blame as he was compelled by the contrary principle to suffer sin and misery in his work, which in the mean while he opposes with all his

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Neither does *Bayle's* amendment of this hypothesis free it from the difficulty. He supposes the two principles to be sensible of the above mentioned consequence arising from their equality of power, and therefore willing to compound the matter, by allowing an equal mixture of good and evil in the intended creation. But if the quantity of good and evil in the creation be exactly equal, neither of the principles has attained or could expect to attain the end for which it was supposed to act. The good principle designed to produce some absolute good, the evil one some absolute evil ; but to produce an equal mixture of both, would be in effect producing neither : One would just counterbalance and destroy the other ; and all such action would be the very same as doing nothing at all : and that such an exact equality of good and evil must be the result of any agreement between them is plain : for as they are by supposition perfectly equal in *inclination*, as well as *power*, neither of them could possibly concede, and let its opposite prevail : the creation therefore cannot be owing to such a composition.

his power. But according to the catholics, as their adversaries object, he permits these voluntarily, nay is the cause and author of them. For if, as these men argue, there be but one author of all things, evils also should be referred to him as their original; but it can neither be explained nor conceived how infinite goodness can become the origin of evil. If God could not hinder it, where is his power? If he could, and would not, where is his goodness? If you say that evil necessarily adheres to some particular natures; since God was the author of them all, it would have been better to have omitted those with the concomitant evils, than to have debased his workmanship with an alloy of these evils (16.)

VI. It is well known, that this difficulty has exercised both the ancient philosophers

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(16.) This objection contains all that can be offered upon evil in general; and is proposed in its full force by *Cudworth**. The supposed deity and maker of the world, was either willing to abolish all evils, but not able; or was able and not willing: or, thirdly, he was neither willing nor able: or, lastly, he was both able and willing. This latter is the only thing that answers fully to the notion of a God. Now, that the supposed creator of all things was not thus both able and willing to abolish all evils, is plain, because then there would have been no evils at all left. Wherefore, since there is such a deluge of evils overflowing all, it must needs be that either he was willing and not able to remove them, and then he was *impotent*: or else he was able and not willing, and then he was *envious* or lastly, he was neither able nor willing, and then he was both *impotent* and *envious*.

Almost the same occurs in *Laërtianus**, and is cited, and sufficiently refuted by our author in c. 3. § 5. *subseq.* the last. See also *Prudentius* in *Hamartigenia*, v. 640. &c.

The substance of all *Bayle*'s objections may be seen in a late book called *Free thought on religion*, &c. c. 5. p. 104, &c. The answers to them follow in their proper places.

* *True Intell. Syst.* p. 78, 79.

† *De Ira Dei*, c. 23. p. 435, edit. Cant.

and fathers of the church : (17.) And there are some who deny that it is yet answered ; nay, who undertake to refute all the solutions hitherto offered ; nor do I promise a complete one in every respect, tho' I hope to shew in the following part of this treatise that it is not wholly unanswerable.

There is more good than evil in the world.

VII. It is manifest that though good be mixed with evil in this life, yet there is much more good than evil in nature, and every animal provides for its preservation by instinct or reason, which it would never do, if it did not think or feel its life, with all the evils annexed, to be much preferable to non-existence. This is a proof of the wisdom, goodness, and power of God, who could thus temper a world infested with so many miseries, that nothing should continue in it which was not in some measure pleased with its existence and which would not endeavour by all possible means to preserve it.*

'Tis no less repugnant to infinite goodness to have created those things which he saw would be corrupted by another, than such as would corrupt themselves.

VIII. Neither does the supposition of an evil principle help any thing towards the solution of this difficulty. For the asserters of two principles maintain that the great and good God tolerates evil purely because he is forced

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The supposition of a double principle is therefore of no service toward the solution of this difficulty (17.) Any one that wants to be acquainted with the antiquity of this dispute, or the persons engaged in it, or the way of managing it made use of by the fathers, may consult the beginning of Dean Clarke's enquiry into the cause and origin of evil, and Bayle's dictionary, in the articles *manicheans*, remark b. *Marcionites*, remark f. and f. *Δ. Paulicians*, remarks k. and k. *Δ. and Zoroaster*, remark e. Or Cudworth, from p. 213, to 224. or Stillingfleet's *origines sacre*, b. 3. c. 3. § 8, 9, 11, 12, &c. or Fabric. *Biblioth. Græc.* v. 5. p. 287. or his *delectus argumentorum*, &c. c. 15.

* See note Z.

ed to it by the evil one, and that either from an agreement between themselves, or a perpetual struggle and contest with each other. For since the beneficent author of nature was hindered by the evil principle from producing all the good he was willing to produce, he either made an agreement with it to produce as much as he was allowed, but with a mixture of evil, according to the agreement : or else there is a mixture good and evil proportionable to the power which prevails in either of them. Hence they think the good God excusable, who conferred as many blessings on the world as his adversary permitted, and would have tolerated no manner of evil, unless compelled to it by the adverse power. So that he must either create no good at all, or suffer an allay of evil.

All which very great absurdities have this farther inconvenience, that they do not answer the very end for which they were invented. For he is no less culpable who created any thing which he knew would be rendered miserable by another, than if he had made that which he foresaw would bring misery upon itself. If therefore God might, consistently with goodness, create things which he knew the evil principle could and would corrupt, as the *manicheans* asserted ; then he might, consistently with the same goodness, have created things that would corrupt themselves, or were to perish in a tract of time. If then, according to the defenders of this hypothesis, God ought to have omitted, or not created those beings, in whose natures evil or contrariety is inherent, he ought also to have omitted those, whose nature he foresaw the evil principle would corrupt. And

if there was so much good in these, as made him think it better to create them, though they were to be corrupted some time or other by the opposite principle, he might also judge it preferable to produce the same, though they were at length to perish by their own inherent evils. Nor will God be forced to tolerate evil in his works more according to the *manicheans*, than the *catholics*. For as he might not have made those beings which have evils necessary adhering to them, so he might also have not made those which he foreknew the contrary principles would corrupt. After the same manner in both cases he would have prevented evil, and since he could, why did he not? The supposition of two principles conduces nothing at all therefore to the solution of this difficulty. (B.)

IX. But

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(B.) To this it has been objected, First, that the recrimination is not just, because there is a great difference between a cause that doth not prevent an evil which he could not prevent, and another that suffers one which he could have prevented; that it is agreed amongst all orthodox christians that God could have prevented the fall of *Adam*, and therefore the blame of it lies on him; whereas according to the system of two principles he could not hinder it, and therefore is excused this way, but not the other.

But I answer, it is plain that the objection does not understand the force of the argument. For according to it, God could have prevented this evil. He foresaw the ill principle would corrupt mankind; and he was under no necessity to make such a creature as man, and thereby to gratify his enemy, who, he saw, would make him miserable. He could therefore have prevented this evil, by not creating *man*, and is full as blameable for making him that he foresaw the ill principles would involve in sin and misery, as if those had befallen man by his own ill use of *his free will*.

But adly, Who are those orthodox that agree God could have prevented the fall of man? Those that I am acquainted with represent the matter otherwise. They say that considering the nature of man and the station he held in the world, and the inconveniencies that must have happened to the whole system of free beings, by hindering *Adam* from the use of his free will, his fall could not have been prevented without more hurt than good to the whole creation. There was no necessity on him to sin, but there was a necessity on God to permit

IX. But if we can point out a method of reconciling these things with the government of an absolute perfect agent, and make them not only consistent with infinite wisdom,

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mit him the use of his free will in that case, and the consequence of that being his sin, God was under a necessity notwithstanding his infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, to permit his fall. He could have prevented it, 'tis true, by taking away free will from man, that is by not making such a creature as man, according to the *catbolics*; and he could have prevented it the same way according to the *Manichees*; for according to them he was under no necessity to make such a creature; and 'tis as hard for one to give an account why he did make him when he knew he would fall, as for the other; so far as I see, the difficulty is equal on both suppositions, and both must have recourse to the same answer; *viz.* that the wisdom of God judged it better to have man with his sin, than the world should want such a creature.

But 3dly. 'Tis objected that the *manichees* have in reality three principles, two active, a good and a bad one, and a third passive or indifferent, that is *matter*: though they vouchsafed the name of principles only to the active. That this indifferent principle was the prey of the first occupier, and the evil one seized it as soon as the good, and would not suffer him to make good out of it, without a mixture of evil.

But this is nothing to the purpose; for it supposes a demonstrable falsehood, that matter is self-existent, whereas there is nothing plainer than that matter has a cause *; and to build hypotheses on manifest falsehoods is unworthy a philosopher.

4dly. Even in this way the good principle might have prevented evil; for he might have let the evil principle alone with his matter, and then he could never have made any thing of it; for his productions must all have been absolutely evil, and whatever is so must immediately destroy itself, or rather in truth nothing could have been produced by such a being.

All his works must have contained in them all imaginable evil and repugnancy; all the parts of them must have been incongruous and inconsistent, and consequently have destroyed themselves and one another. Nay, such a being could have properly no power at all; for if he produced any thing which was consistent, it would be so far good, and so good would proceed from a principle absolutely evil, which is no less a contradiction than that evil should be produced by one absolutely good: which if it be allowed, there's no farther occasion to enquiry after the origin of evil at all. For that may proceed from an infinitely good being, as well as good can from one infinitely evil. From hence it is evident, that the bringing in of two principles does not in the least account for the origin of evil.

* See Remark d.

If it can be shewn that it does not contradict infinite power and goodness to permit evil, or that these necessarily arise from the exercise of them, then may the difficulty be answered.

goodness and power, but necessarily resulting from them (so that these would not be infinite, if those did not or could not possibly exist) then we may be supposed to have at last discovered the true origin of evils, and answered all the difficulties and objections that are brought upon this head, against the goodness, wisdom, power, and unity of God. Let us try therefore what can be done in each kind of evil; and first, concerning the *evil of imperfection*.

C H A P. III.

Of the Evil of Defect.

AS for the evil of *imperfection*, it is to be considered, that before the world was created God existed alone, and nothing beside him. All things therefore are out of nothing and whatsoever exists, has its existence from God; neither can that existence be different either in kind or degree from what he gave.*

Things can be no otherwise than as God pleased.

II. Secondly, God, though he be omnipotent, cannot make any created being *absolutely perfect*, for whatever is absolutely perfect, must necessarily be self-existent. But it is included in the very notion of a creature, as such, not to exist of itself, but from God. An absolutely perfect creature therefore implies a contradiction. For it would be of itself and not of itself at the same time. (18.) Absolute

All created things are necessarily imperfect, since they do not exist of themselves.

N O T E S.

(18.) A *perfect creature* is a contradiction in terms. For if it be *perfect* it is *independent*; and if it be *independent* it is no *creature*. Again; to suppose a created being *infinite* in any respect, is to suppose it *equal* to its creator in that respect; and if it be equal in one respect, it must be so in all; since an infinite property cannot inhere in any finite subject, for then the attribute would be more perfect than its subject, all which is absurd. Granting therefore this one principle, which cannot be

* See Scot in note 32.

solute perfection is therefore peculiar to God, and if he should communicate his own peculiar perfection to another, that other would be God. The *evil of imperfection* must therefore be tolerated in creatures, notwithstanding the divine omnipotence and goodness; for contradictions are objects of no power. God might indeed have refrained from creating, and continued alone, self-sufficient, and perfect to all eternity, but his infinite goodness would by no means allow it; this obliged him to produce external things; which things, since they could not possibly be perfect; the divine goodness preferred imperfect ones to none at all. Imperfection then arose from the infinity of divine goodness. Had not God been infinitely good, perhaps he might not have permitted imperfect beings; but have been content in himself, and created nothing at all.

'Tis to be determined by the divine pleasure what degrees of perfection every thing must have, since all things are necessarily at an infinite distance from the highest perfection.

III. *Thirdly*, There are infinite degrees of perfection between a being *absolutely perfect* and *nothing*: of which, if existence be conceived as the first, every thing will be so many degrees distant from nothing, as there are *perfections* to be found in it joyn'd with existence. In this scale then God will be the *top*, and nothing the *bottom*; and how much farther any thing is distant from nothing, it is so much the more perfect, and approaches nearer to God. How much any thing can resemble God in perfection, or how nearly approach-

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deneyed (*viz.* that an effect must be inferior to its cause) it will appear that the evil of imperfection, supposing a *creation*, is necessary and unavoidable; and consequently, all other evils which necessarily arise from that, are unavoidable also. What our author has advanced upon the following head seems perfectly conclusive.

proach to him (C.) we know not ; but we are certain that there is always an infinite distance between them. It must have been determined therefore by the will of God, where he would stop, since there is nothing but his own will to bound his power. Now it is to be believed that the present system of the world was the very best that could be, with regard to the mind of God in framing it. (19.) It might have been better per-

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(C.) Supposing the world to be infinite, there would be, as far as appears to us, infinite orders of creatures descending gradually from God to nothing ; but since neither our understanding can comprehend, nor does the nature of quantity and motion seem to admit of infinity or eternity ; 'tis better to refer the matter to the divine will. For if any infinity in creatures be impossible, 'tis the same thing wherever we stop ; since all finites are equally distant from infinite. If therefore God had created twice, or a thousand thousand times as great, and as many beings, and a thousand thousand ages sooner than he has, the same objections might be made, why not before ? why not more ? the world therefore must either have been created infinite and from eternity, which the very nature of the thing seems not to allow, or it is all one when and how great it might be, and not determinable by any thing besides the divine pleasure. See Chap. 5 §. 1 Subst. 4. and *J. Clarke on Nat. Evil.* p. 90, 93, 280, &c.

(19) In order to confirm this belief, and come to a right knowledge of the whole question before us, it is necessary to enquire a little into the meaning of these words ; to consider (with reverence) what this design of God might be in framing the world, and what was the most proper method of attaining it. Now it appear'd from the conclusion of the first chapter and note 13. that the sole design of Almighty God in creating the universe, was to impart felicity to other beings ; and in the beginning of this chapter it was proved that any happiness thus communicated could not be *infinite*. His design then is completely answer'd, if the greatest degree of happiness be imparted of which created beings are capable, consistent with one another ; or when the utmost possible good is produced in the universe collectively. This also shews us what we are to understand by *the very best system*, viz. one that is fitted for, and productive of the greatest absolute *general good* : The manner of effecting which comes next under consideration. As to this, it is queried in the first place whether all animals ought to have been created equally perfect ; or several in different ranks and degrees of perfection ; and secondly, whether

perhaps in some particulars, but not without some new, and probably greater inconveni-

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whether God may be supposed to have placed any order of beings in such a fix'd unalterable condition as not to admit of advancement: to have made any creatures as perfect at first as the nature of a created being is capable of. The former of these doubts is fully discuss'd in this and the following chapter, §. 2. The latter seems not so easy to be determin'd. They who hold the affirmative argue from our notion of infinite or *absolute goodness*, which must excite the deity always to communicate all manner of *happiness* in the very highest degree, for the same reason that it prompts him to communicate it ever in any degree. But this, say they, he has not done, except he at first endow'd some creatures with all the perfection a creature could possibly receive, and gave to every subordinate class of beings*, the utmost *happiness* their several natures were capable of. Neither can this opinion be confuted from Holy Scripture, which declares that God made innumerable glorious orders of *Cherubim* and *Seraphim*, all far above our comprehension, and some, for any thing that we know, in the very next step to the *top* of the great *scale of beings*, and only *second* to the Almighty. Those that hold the contrary opinion distinguish between happiness and perfection, and think that these do not either necessarily imply, or inseparably attend each other. They deny therefore the consequence of the former argument, and assign this reason for it, *viz.* because a being produced in the highest degree of natural perfection, *i. e.* knowledge, power, &c. which a creature is capable of and still continuing in the *same*, will not receive so much *happiness* in the main, as others that were placed in a much inferior state at the first; but have been raised, and in some degree contributed to raise themselves to a higher in these respects.

This, though it may appear something like a paradox, yet upon farther consideration will perhaps be judged not improbable, when it is considered that most part of our intellectual happiness appears to be *relative*, consisting in a comparison with ourselves or some others, in a different situation from that wherein we are placed at present. Thus for a creature to meet with a perpetual accession of new, unknown pleasure,—to reflect with comfort on its past condition, and compare it with the present,—to enjoy a continued series of fresh satisfaction and delight, and be always approaching nearer and nearer to perfection,—this must certainly advance the sum of its *happiness*, even above that of others, whose condition is supposed to have begun and to continue in that precise degree of perfection where this will end (if there could be any end in either) and which never knew defect, variety, or increase. A finite being fix'd in the same state, however excellent, must according to all our conceptions (if we be allow'd to judge from our present faculties,) contract a kind of *indolence* or *insensibility* (*i. e.* cannot always be equally affected by an equal degree of good in the object) which insensibility

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* Concerning these classes, see notes 22, and 24.

veniencies, which must have spoiled the beauty either of the whole, or of some principal part.

IV. Fourthly,

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nothing but alteration and variety can cure. It does not therefore seem probable that God has actually fixed any created beings whatsoever in the very highest degree of perfection next to himself. Nay, it is impossible to conceive any such highest degree, since that which admits of a continual addibility, can have no *highest*. Since then the creation cannot be infinite; and finites, how much soever amplified, can never reach infinity, we can set no manner of bounds to the creating power of God: But must refer all to his infinite wisdom and goodness: Which attributes we know can never be exhausted, nor will, we believe, produce any beings in such a state as shall not leave room enough for them to be still growing in felicity, and for ever acquiring new happiness, together with new perfections.

This notion of a growing happiness, is embraced by most divines, and affords the strongest motive for endeavouring to improve and excel in every christian grace. 'Tis beautifully touch'd by Addison. Spectator No. 111. "There is not, in my opinion, a more pleasing and triumphant consideration in religion, than this: of the perpetual progress which the soul makes towards the perfections of its nature, without ever arriving at a period in it. To look upon the soul as going on from strength to strength, to consider that she is to shine for ever with new accessions of glory, and brighten to all eternity; that she will be still adding virtue to virtue, and knowledge to knowledge, carries in it something wonderfully agreeable to that ambition which is natural to the mind of man. Nay, it must be a prospect pleasing to God himself, to see his creation for ever beautifying in his eyes, and drawing nearer to him by degrees of resemblance."

That the happiness of saints and angels may be continually encreasing, see Tillotson's 77th Sermon. Vol. 2, Fol. p. 503, &c.

From these considerations, and some which follow in the remainder of this note, it may perhaps seem probable that in us, and all beings of the like nature, changes from worse to better must be attended even with greater degrees of pleasure than settled permanence in any the highest state conceivable of glory or perfection, and consequently become necessary to the completion of finite happiness.

But in opposition to all this, Bayle urges that increase or alteration is not in the least requisite to a lasting felicity even in ourselves.

"That 'tis no ways necessary that our soul should feel e-

* See note e. or q. or Bentley's Bayle's *Leſſ.* Sermon. 6. p. 236, 237. 5th edit.

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could not
be equally
perfect,
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are parts
of others.

IV. *Fourthly*, From hence it appears also that all beings cannot have equal perfecti-
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"vil, to the end it may relish what is good, and that it
"should pass successively from pleasure to pain, and from
"pain to pleasure, that it may be able to discern that pain is
"an evil, and pleasure is a good. We know by experi-
"ence that our soul cannot feel, at one and the same time,
"both pleasure and pain; it must therefore at first either
"have felt pain before pleasure, or pleasure before pain. If
"its first sensation was that of pain, it found that state to be
"uneasy, altho' it was ignorant of pleasure. Suppose then
"that its first sensation lasted many years, without interrup-
"tion, you may conceive that it was in an easy condition, or
"in one that was uneasy. And do not alledge to me experi-
"ence; do not tell me that a pleasure which lasts a long time
"becomes insipid, and that a long pain becomes supporta-
"ble: For I will answer you, that this proceeds from a change
"in the organ which makes that pain, which continues the
"same as to kind, to be different as to degrees. If you have
"had at first a sensation of six degrees, it will not continue
"of six to the end of two hours, or to the end of a year,
"but only either of one degree, or of one fourth part of a
"degree. Thus custom blunts the edge of our sensations:
"their degrees correspond to the concussions of the parts of
"the brain, and this concussion is weakened by frequent re-
"petitions: From whence it comes to pass that the degrees
"of sensation are diminished. But if pain or joy were com-
"municated to us in the same degree successively for an hun-
"dred years, we should be as unhappy, or as happy in the
"hundredth year, as in the first day; which plainly proves
"that a creature may be happy with a continued good, or
"unhappy with a continued evil, and that the *alternative*,
"which *Laërtius* speaks of*, is a bad solution of the diffi-
"culty. It is not founded upon the nature of good and
"evil, nor upon the nature of the subject which receives
"them: nor upon the nature of the cause which produces
"them. Pleasure and pain are no less proper to be communi-
"cated the second moment than the first, and the third mo-
"ment than the second, and so of all the rest. Our soul is also
"as susceptible of them after it has felt them one moment, as
"it was before it felt them, and God who gave them, is no
"less capable of producing them the second moment than
"the first†."

As this is one of the strongest objections, and applicable to all kinds of evil, I have quoted it at length (tho' some parts may not relate immediately to our present purpose) and shall endeavour to give a full answer to it in the following notes. It will be consider'd with respect to moral good and evil, in notes, 62, 83, 84. Let us confine ourselves at present to na-

* See Note 79. p. 447. † *Critic. Diſt.* p. 2486.

ons. For the world must necessarily be composed of various *parts*, and those *parts* of other

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tural good, which may be divided into sensitive and intellectual. As to the former, we perceive that the mind, for the augmentation of its happiness, is endowed with various senses, each of which is entertain'd with a variety of objects: now, any one of these senses can convey so much pleasure for some time as is sufficient to fill our present narrow capacity, and engross the whole soul. She can be entirely happy in the satisfaction arising from the sight, hearing, &c. or from the memory, or any other mode of perception by itself. If therefore any one of these organs could (as *Bayle* supposes) continue to communicate the same degree of pleasure to us for an hundred years, all the rest would be unnecessary: But an all-wise being, who cannot act in vain, has implanted this variety of senses in us; this then is a good argument (to those who allow such a being, upon the belief of which I am now arguing) that none of these particular senses could continue in its present state, and always communicate the same degree of happiness. Farther, his supposition will appear to be impossible, from considering the nature and properties of that matter of which the sensitive organs are composed. If there be (as *Bayle* maintains) so close a connection between the soul and certain modifications of matter, as that the degrees of sensitive pleasures are diminished by a change in the organ, by weakening the concussion of some parts of the brain by *frequent repetitions*; then we say, 'tis plainly impossible that the same degrees should be continued by this organ, which, as it is material, is perpetually exposed to this *change*, and liable to dissolution, and necessarily weakened by these *frequent concussions*. Every motion in it must in time be stopped by contrary ones, as our author has fully shewn in chapter 4. §. 1.

If he supposes that the same degree of pleasure may still be communicated tho' the organ alters, he supposes that there is no such connection between any portion or position of matter and our spirit; which is directly contrary to his former supposition, and also to truth, as will perhaps appear from the following chapter. If then *Bayle* imagines that the same or different matter, when moved or at rest; or when moved in different directions, may still affect the mind in the very same manner, he must either take it for granted that the affections of matter are no causes of the sensations of the mind, that is, contradict his former supposition; or else he must suppose the same effect to proceed from different causes; either of which will tend equally to advance his system. But in reality, this decrease of pleasure in familiarity and custom does not perhaps entirely depend on any change of the corporeal organs, but on the original faculties of the soul itself, as may be gathered from some such observations as this which follows. View a delightful landscape, a pleasant Garden,

others, and so on. But a part must needs come short both of the *divine perfection*, and the perfection of the *whole*. For it is nothing with regard to all the perfections which it has not, whether these be divine,
or

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den, or any of the figures which appear most *beautiful*, renew the prospect once, or twice, to day, to morrow, and at several distant periods; it shall afford a great degree of pleasure for some time, while any *novelty* may be supposed to remain; but that pleasure perishes together with this novelty, tho' the external organs of vision still continue perfect, and your sensations are most evidently the same the last day as the first. You are able to behold the same scenes over again, with the same ease and acuteness, but not with the same intenseness of delight. To attempt a mechanical solution of this by a supposed alteration of some imaginary *traces* in the brain (which yet, if they were allowed, cannot mend the matter a jot, as was just now shewn) will only throw us into still greater difficulties, as any one that attentively considers the whole of that chimerical hypothesis must conclude, and of which *Bayle*, who soon perceived the defects and absurdities of most other systems, was undoubtedly convinced. It seems to me much more properly resolvable into a native property of the soul itself. Is it not probable that the mind of man is originally framed with a disposition for, or capacity of being delighted with *variety*? That it cannot be always on the same bent, but as it is endow'd with different faculties, so these relieve one another by turns, and receive an additional pleasure from the *novelty* of those objects about which it is conversant; and that by this means it enjoys a greater sum of happiness than it could other ways attain to? See the *Spectator*, No. 590. No. 615. No. 411. or *Watts* on the *Passions*, §. 4. or Lord *Kaim's* Elements of Criticism v. 1 c. 6.

I shall only add an observation on this head from the author of the *Vindication of God's Moral character*, p. 21. which shews us the necessity for this variety or increaseableness of perfection, in order to our *intellectual happiness*, since most of that arises from our past defects. 'By intellectual happiness, I mean the discovery and contemplation of truth, with regard to which I have this to observe, that all the pleasures we taste of this kind are owing either to our preceding ignorance, to the care and pains we take in the discovery of truth, or to the degree of our knowledge, when we attain to a greater measure than other men. All truth, when consider'd separate from these, is alike as truth (tho' not of the like importance to us) the object of the understanding, and as such, it must afford the same delight. If we all could, with equal ease and clearness, see all the relations of things, they must all in the nature of the things equally affect us. We should taste as much pleasure
sure

or created; and since one part is not another, nor the *whole*, it is plain that every part wants the

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* *sure in knowing or contemplating that two and two make four, as in knowing or contemplating any proposition which now appears the most difficult, and so affords the most pleasure: or rather, we should not have pleasure from any of them. Now if this be the case, then is it evident that the capacity we have for tasting this kind of pleasure renders us capable of its contrary. We could not be delighted in the discovery or contemplation of truth, if we were not capable of being ignorant, and of the unhappiness which arises from it.*

This is the consequence we would draw from all that went before: but of this more at large under the head of *moral evil*.

We reply then to *Bayle*, that this *alternative* or variety of either good or evil, so far as concerns the present argument is founded on the nature of the *subject which receives them*, and that our soul in its present state, is not so susceptible of them after it has felt them two or three times as at first. What it might have been made capable of, is nothing to the purpose, since (as it was observed before, and must often be repeated) we are to consider man as we find him at present; and draw all our arguments, not from such faculties as are perhaps in other beings, but from these only which we perceive and experience in him. If these cannot be altered and improved consistently with each other*, nor subjected to any general laws more suitable to his present circumstances, and productive of more good to the whole system†, then, all arguments built on this topic against the divine attributes must fall to the ground. These and the like suppositions therefore, *viz. that the same degree of pleasure might be communicated to us successively for a hundred years*;—if understood of one uniform cause producing it: *That our pleasures*, (meaning *sensitive ones*) *might not depend on the fibres of the brain*,—and, *that these fibres should not wear out at all*‡,—or, if these fibres did wear out, *that the pleasure should never decay*,—are all unreasonable suppositions: they offend against the rule laid down above, and always to be remembered, of taking the whole human nature as it is; of considering our present body and spirit, and the obvious properties of each, and the known laws of their union together. All such objections therefore are beside the question; and founded upon the old absurdity of reducing us to a different *class* of beings, when (as will appear presently) all conceivable classes and orders are already full.

Thus much for one query about the manner of creating things, *viz. whether any should have been fixed immutably in a certain degree*

* See note 28.

† See note 25.

‡ See *Bayle's Dict.* p. 2487.

the perfections not only of the whole, but of other parts also. And that the *whole* is more perfect than a *part* is evident from hence, that it necessarily includes the multiplied perfection of every part; and besides, the parts when joined together and connected, acquire a new and peculiar perfection, whereby they answer their proper ends, which they could not do asunder; they defend themselves much better, and assist each other. The perfection of the whole therefore, is not only more *extensive* than that of the parts, by the accumulation of many parts, perhaps equal to one another; but more *intense* also, by the addition of certain *degrees*, whereby the whole must of necessity excel the parts. As therefore we have proved that an absolutely perfect creature is an impossibility, so it may be proved from hence, that all cannot have an *equal degree* of perfection. For the world consists of parts, and those again of others, perhaps divisible in *infinitum*: but that every single part should have the perfection of all, or many, is impossible; and we are not to arraign the power or goodness of God for not working contradictions. There must then be many, perhaps infinite (20.) Degrees of perfection in the divine works; for whatever arises from *nothing* is necessarily imperfect; and the less

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degree of perfection: our author proceeds to examine the other, *viz.* Whether all things could and ought to have been at first in the *same* degree of perfection?

(20.) That is *indefinite*, or greater than any given number; for neither the universe itself nor any thing that belongs to it, can be properly and absolutely infinite, as our author maintains in his note B, and we have largely proved from *Cudworth, &c.* in the former chapter.

(21.) It

it is removed from nothing (taking *existence* for one degree, as we said before) the more imperfect it is. There is no occasion therefore for an evil principle to introduce the evil of defect, or an inequality of perfections in the works of God: for the very nature of created beings necessarily requires it, and we may conceive the place of this malicious principle to be abundantly supplied from hence, that they derive their origin from *nothing*. (21.)

V. Fifthly,

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(21.) It is scarce necessary to observe, that this must all along be understood only *materially*, i. e. that these things were not produced from any matter *pre-existent*, but were made *ex nihilo*, and brought into being from mere *non-existence*. For the possibility of which, and the opinion of the ancients on this subject, see *Cassiodorus*, c. 5. §. 2. p. 732, &c. The other senses of the words, *viz.* That any thing can come from nothing *causally*, or be produced *by* nothing, or *by itself*, or *without* an *efficient cause*, are manifestly absurd, as is demonstrated at large in the same excellent section. For an illustration of our author's notion before us, see *Scott's Christian Life*, part 2. vol. 1. c. 6. §. 2. p. 446, 447. 1st. edit. 'God is the *cause of perfection* only, but not of defect, which so far forth as it is *natural to created beings* hath no cause at all, but is merely a *negation or non-entity*. For every created thing was a *negation or non-entity* before ever it had a *positive being*, and it had only so much of its *primitive negation taken away* from it, as it had *positive being* conferred upon it; and therefore, so far forth as it *is*, its *being* is to be attributed to the *sovereign cause* that produced it; but so far as it *is not*, its *not being* is to be attributed to the *original non-entity* out of which it was produced. For that which was once nothing, would still have been nothing, had it not been for the *cause* that gave *being* to it, and therefore that it is so far nothing still, i. e. *limited and defective*, is only to be attributed to its own *primitive nothingness*. As for instance, if I give a poor man a hundred pounds, that he is worth *so much* money is wholly owing to me, but that he is not worth a hundred *more*, is owing only to his own poverty; and just so, that I have such and such *perfections* of being is wholly owing to *God* who produced me out of nothing; but that I have such and such *defects* of being is only owing to that *non-entity* out of which he produced me.'

The same notion is largely discussed in *Eilhardi Lubini Phosphorus*, &c. chap. 6, 7, and 17. From whom it appears, that most of

Things necessarily are of unequal perfections with regard to their attributes; but it is agreeable to the highest Goodness to create those which are least perfect, if they are no hindrance to the number or convenience of the more perfect ones.

V. *Fifthly*, 'Tis plain, that creatures are not only unequally imperfect in respect of their *parts* and *under-parts*, and so on, which by continual subdivision, approach in a manner to nothing; but a necessary inequality arises among them also in respect to their *attributes*. For a conscious or thinking substance is more perfect than one that wants sense or understanding. If it be asked, How is it agreeable to the divine goodness to have created these also? I answer, if the creation of these be no impediment to the production of the more perfect; if neither the number nor happiness of the more perfect be diminished by the creation of those that are less perfect, why will it be unfit to create these too? since God does what is best to be done, nothing more or greater can be expected from the most benevolent and powerful author of nature. If therefore it be better, *ceteris paribus*, that these more imperfect beings should exist, than not, it is agreeable to the divine goodness that the best that could be should be done. If the production of a less perfect being were any hindrance to a more perfect one, it would appear contrary to divine goodness to have omitted the more perfect and created the less; but since they are no manner of hindrance to each other, the more the better. (22.)

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the antient philosophers meant no more than this by their *evil principle*.

(22.) From the supposition of a scale of beings gradually descending from *perfection* to *non-entity*, and complete in every intermediate rank and degree [for which see note 24.] we shall soon perceive the absurdity of such questions as these, Why was not man made more perfect? Why are not his faculties equal to those of

VI. An instance will make this more clear. Suppose that God made the world *finite*; suppose that *spirits*, or pure immaterial thinking beings, are the *most perfect* species of substances: suppose, in the last place, that God created as many of this sort as were convenient for the

This confirmed by an instance of matter, which is no impediment to pure spirits.

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of angels? Since this is only asking why he was not placed in a different class of beings, when at the same time all other classes are supposed to be already full. From the same principle also we gather the intent of the Creator in producing these several inferior orders under our view. They who imagine that all things in this world were made for the immediate use of man alone, run themselves into inextricable difficulties. Man indeed is the head of this lower part of the creation, and perhaps it was designed to be absolutely under his command. But that all things here tend directly to his use, is, I think, neither easy nor necessary to be proved. Some manifestly serve for the food and support of others, whose souls may be necessary to prepare and preserve their bodies for that purpose, and may at the same time be happy in a consciousness of their own existence. It is probable that they are intended to promote each others good reciprocally: nay, man himself contributes to the happiness, and betters the condition of the brutes in several respects, by cultivating and improving the ground, by watching the seasons, by protecting and providing for them, when they are unable to protect and provide for themselves*. Others, of a much lower class, may, for ought we know, enjoy themselves too in some degree or other; and also contribute to the happiness even of superior beings, by a display of the divine attributes in different ways, and affording ample matter of reflection on the various ranks and degrees of perfection discoverable in the animal world: wherein the highest order may with pleasure contemplate numberless species infinitely below them†. And the lower class admire and adore that infinity of divine wisdom, and goodness, and power which shines forth in so many beings so much above them. They may conduce to the beauty, order, and benefit of the whole system, the general good of which was the aim of its Creator, and with regard to which every part is chiefly to be estimated‡. They may have ten thousand uses beside what relates to man, who is but a very small part of it: several instances might be given which would make this very probable; at least the contrary, I think, cannot ever be proved. See c. 4. §. 2. Subl. 4, 5.

* See Chubb's *Sup.* p. 12. and Dr. J. Clarke, p. 284, 285.

† See Cudworth, p. 875, 876. or Tillotson, *Serm.* 91. p. 683. 3d vol. fol. or Ray on the *Creation*, part 2. p. 423 4th edit. or note G.

system he had made, so that if there were more, they would incommode one another; yet there would be no less room for matter, than if there were none at all. (D.) This supposition is by no means absurd; for since these may be conceived without *local extension*, and have no relation to *space* or *place*, as bodies have*, in whatever number they were created, they would

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(D). If any one had a mind to fill a certain vessel with globes of various magnitudes, and had distinguished them into their several degrees, so that those of the second degree might have place in the interstices left by those of the first; and those of the third order in the interstices of the second, and so on. It is evident, that when as many of the first magnitude were put in as the vessel could contain yet there would be room for those of the second. Neither could any wise man ask, Why the whole vessel was not filled with the greater globes; or, why all of them were not of the same magnitude.

This instance may afford an answer to such a demand, Why God has not given a different and more perfect nature to brute animals, *viz.* There was no room in the mundane system for beings of a more perfect nature. But when as many creatures were made of the superior order as the system of the world was able to contain, whether you suppose it finite or infinite, nothing hindered but that there might be room for others of a lower degree; as when as many globes of greater magnitude were put into the vessel as it could hold, yet there was still a space for others of a less dimension; and so on *in infinitum*. When, therefore, any ask, Why God did not make all of the same perfection with the *angels*?

We answer, That after as many angels had been made as were convenient, there was a place left for inferior animals, and after as many animals of a more perfect nature were made as the system required, there was still room for other more imperfect ones; and so, perhaps, *in infinitum*.

If you ask, Why God does not immediately transplant men into heaven, since it is plain they are capable of that happier state; or why he detains them so long from that happiness, and confines them on the earth as in a darksome prison where they are forced to struggle with so many evils.

I answer, Because the heavens are already furnished with inhabitants, and cannot with convenience admit of new ones, till some of the present possessors depart into a better state, or make room some other way for these to change their condition. See note Y.

* See note 7.

contribute

contribute nothing at all either to the filling up of space, or excluding bodies out of it, yet they would have a certain *system* or *society* among themselves, which might require a determinate number, which, if it were exceeded, they must become troublesome to one another by too great a multitude in a finite world. Nay, if the world were supposed to be *infinite*, and as many such spirits created as were possible, yet would they be no impediment to matter, or matter to them; neither would their number be less, nor their conveniences fewer, because matter did or did not exist. Since then material and immaterial beings consist so well together, is it not agreeable to the greatest goodness to have created both? Let matter be stupid and devoid of sense as it is; let it be the most imperfect of all substances, and next to nothing, (since not to perceive its existence is little different from non-existence) it is better to be even so, than not at all; for existence is, as we said, the foundation, or first degree of perfection, and the next as it were to this, the second, is perception of existence. But you will say, Why did not God add this second degree to matter? I answer, if that could, it is probable it would have been done: but since we see that matter is in itself a passive, inert substance, we must believe that its nature would not admit of *sense*, or if it had been capable of sense, that greater inconveniences would have flowed from thence, than if it had been made insensible, as it is. (23).
However,

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(23.) *Matter*, as such, and in itself, is incapable of thought and self-motion, it is, therefore, in a degree below animals, or (as our author says) next to nothing. But yet, such as it is, it

However, without this there would be a kind of *void* in the universe, and something wanting which might exist : but it was better that there should be matter than nothing at all, and since one side was to be chosen, the Divine goodness preferred matter, because that was the greater good. For since it is no hindrance to the multiplication or convenience of thinking beings, nor diminishes the number of the more perfect, it is plain it adds to the perfection of the universe, and whatever it be, though the most imperfect thing in Nature, it is gain to the whole.

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is first, absolutely necessary to many animals ; and secondly, would not be so convenient for their uses if it could think. It is the *basis* or *support* of animals in this our system ; it is, as we may say, the *case* and *covering* of their several souls ; it serves for the *clothing* of that case, for their *food*, their *defence*, and various uses. But were it all life, or conscious (not to insist on the absurdities of such a supposition in itself) what misery and confusion would arise ? If all were animals, what must these animals subsist on ? If they were of the same nature with such as we are acquainted with, they must also be sustained after the same manner, *i. e.* they must live by *food*, and consequently live upon, and continually torment and consume one another : and consequently more happiness would be lost than got by such a life, which is as plentiful at present, * as seems agreeable to the system. If matter, as matter, were endowed with the power of *self-motion*, what use could we put it to ? What clothing or habitations ? What instruments or utensils could we make of it ? But this, I think, needs no farther explanation. Matter then, in its present state, as united with and subservient to such spirits as we conceive ours to be, is in general more conducive to the good and happiness of the whole, than it would be in any other conceivable manner of existence. To ask yet, Why some certain portions or systems of it might not have been made more perfect, or why it was not farther sublimated, refined, and so modified as to be rendered capable of thought ? is the absurd question above-mentioned, *viz.* Why was it not made something else, or removed into a higher class ? When at the same time there appears so much reason for the existence of such a thing as this now is ; and all superior classes are concluded to be full. What reason there is for this last conclusion may be seen in note 24, p. 127.

* See note 26.

It was therefore agreeable to the greatest power and goodness to have created this also; nor need we the *Demiurgus* of the antient heretics to produce it, as if unworthy of the great and good God. The evils of imperfection then must be permitted in the nature of things; an inequality of perfections must be permitted also, since it is impossible that all the works of God should be endowed with equal perfections. (E.)

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(E.) The author has been blamed here for making any difficulty about such evils as these of imperfection, which are properly speaking no evils at all. It is trifling, say the objectors, since we see that the perfection of any structure or machine consists in this, that the parts thereof have different powers and offices, and therefore we can easily conceive it to be no imperfection in the machine of the world that its parts are of unequal perfections; for those that seem to have the less perfection would not answer their design, nor fill their places if they were not so unequal. And as for inanimate things they are neither capable of good nor evil; it signifies nothing where they are placed, or to what motions they are subjected, since they cannot complain or be sensible of their condition. Consequently there is no such thing as the evil of *imperfection*, but all is properly *natural*.

To all which we answer, First, The world and every part of it is in its own nature imperfect, for whatsoever is naturally perfect, is self-sufficient, and does not stand in need of the combination of more parts or the assistance of other things; for that complication of parts which is observable in machines is necessary upon this account only, that one may supply the defects of another.

2dly. From hence it is evident, that the perfection of the parts is not to be estimated from their own private conveniency alone, but from the relation which they have to the whole. And there's a great deal of difference between relative and absolute perfection; a thing may perfectly answer the office it bears with regard to the whole, without any convenience to itself, nay to its own destruction.

3dly. It appears, that notwithstanding the infinite power, wisdom, and goodness of God, creatures must necessarily labour under the evil of imperfection; and that this imperfection is to be considered two ways, the one with regard to the whole, the other in respect of particulars.

4thly. The good of the whole cannot be, in every thing, at all times, consistent with the good of each particular. For as every
part

*Tis less agreeable to the Divine Goodness to have omitted, than to have created these more imperfect Beings.

VII. If you say, God might have omitted the more imperfect beings, I grant it, and if that had been best he would undoubtedly have done it.

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part is in its own nature imperfect and limited, it is possible for it not to be self-sufficient, and that it may have as much occasion for external assistance, as reason to assist others. The possibility of such a state follows from the very nature of limitation and imperfection. For supposing more things than one of a limited nature, if they have any intercourse together, they must necessarily affect each other. And it belongs to the Divine Goodness so to frame them, that they shall assist and relieve each other. Now limited natures ought to have limited powers and acts, nor can all faculties agree to every nature; since they may be different, distinct and opposite. And though these agents which have contrary faculties cannot promote each other's benefit immediately; yet by taking a compass, and conspiring to act in concert, they may conduce to the good of the whole and of each other. But since created things are almost infinite, and endowed with an infinite diversity of powers and properties; and since an intercourse is established between all of them, so that they may act upon, and be acted on by each other, it is impossible but that some opposition and contention should arise among the parts, which nevertheless may make for the benefit of the whole; neither can these oppositions and contentions be any bar to the Divine Power and Goodness, since they proceed not from any defect in the Creator, but from the necessary imperfection of such things as are in their own nature limited and finite, but which are necessary to the good of the whole system, the general benefit whereof is to be preferred to the good of some particulars whensoever they are inconsistent. There must then be defects, or want of perfection in several parts of the creation, and this want of perfection must of necessity bring many inconveniencies on the person whose lot it is to fill that part of the universe, which requires a creature of such an imperfect nature. For example, a man has no wings, a perfection granted to birds. It is plain, that in his present circumstances he cannot have them, and that the use of them would be very mischievous to society; and yet the want of them necessarily exposes us to many inconveniencies.

He falls from a precipice or into a pit; wings would have saved him from the fall, and relieve him from his imprisonment; whereas now he breaks his bones, or starves by his confinement. A thousand instances may be given where the evil of imperfection necessarily subjects us to disappointment of appetite, and several other natural evils; which yet are all necessary for the common good.

It. But it is the part of infinite Goodness to chuse the very best; from thence it proceeds therefore, that

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If it be asked, why God, as he is of infinite power and wisdom, did not order things in such a manner that the good of the whole should, in all cases and at all times, conspire with that of each particular: or if these evils necessarily arise from the mutual intercourse of parts of a different and contrary kind, why did he ordain such an intercourse? Could he not have created all things in such a state of perfection, that they should find their happiness in themselves without the help of any thing external? At least he should have made those things, which he himself had the framing of, in such a manner as to have no intercourse with any Being but himself. For they might have had enough to exercise their faculties upon in the contemplation and love of the divine nature; which would have been sufficient for their happiness, without any commerce with, or dependence upon other creatures; especially such as would incommode them. Why therefore did God choose such a system, as made room for other imperfect, miserable Beings?

We answer, that granting such creatures as those above-mentioned to be possible, God has actually created as many of that kind as the system would admit; insomuch, that if there had been more, it would have been more inconvenient. Nor is it of any consequence, whether we suppose this system to be finite or infinite. If finite, it is plain that a certain number may fill it so that there will be no room for more. If infinite, infinite creatures of the same kind will equally fill an infinite system, as a finite number will fill a finite one; for there is the same proportion. In this, then, as well as the former system, there will be no place for more. But yet, when this system, or order of creatures, is filled up, there would be room left for the other less perfect orders, whose natures and faculties might have a mutual relation to each other, and whose happiness might require their mutual help and assistance. It is certain, that many and various orders and degrees of this kind were possible; neither would they, if created, be any impediment to the more perfect order, which is already completed; and the number of which could not be increased, without damage to the system; neither would the addition of these inferior orders and degrees, lessen the number of the prior and more perfect ones.

What therefore was to be done? Let us now suppose God deliberating with himself, whether he should create any of the inferior order. If he does, it is manifest, that he will introduce unnecessary imperfections into his works. Nay, since some of these may have natures and powers contrary to each other, it will be possible for clashing and opposition to arise among his creatures.

that the more imperfect Beings have existence ;
for it was agreeable to that not to omit the very
least

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If he does not create them, he will appear unkind, in grudging and refusing them a benefit, which he was able to communicate, without detriment to the system. For I suppose these inferior ones not to be so very imperfect, but that their existence would be deemed a great and valuable blessing.

Who does not see what way the Divine Goodness would incline in this debate? For since it was better that these should exist, than not, is it not agreeable to infinite Goodness to choose the best? At least such a choice could be no injury to the greatest goodness.

Whatever system God had chosen, all creatures in it could not have been equally perfect, and there could have been but a certain determinate multitude of the most perfect, and when that was completed, there would have been a station for creatures less perfect, and it would still have been an instance of goodness to give them a Being, as well as others; and therefore whatever system had been chosen, it would have come to what we see, perhaps it would have been worse. Since therefore whatever God had chosen, there must have been degrees of perfection, and one creature must have been more imperfect and infirm than another, ought we not to conclude, that our present system is at least equal to any other that we could have expected?

Hence it appears why God created such Beings, as must necessarily have an intercourse with each other, and how agreeable it was to the Divine Goodness not to deny them existence. There could be no reason to ask why he did not make them of a more perfect order, since as many of that kind are made already as the system could receive, of what kind soever that system were supposed to be. Neither could the benefit of the whole be rendered absolutely, in all cases, and at all times, consistent with that of particulars. For though this might perhaps be effected in the more perfect orders, yet it is plainly impossible in the less perfect ones, such as have a connection with matter, that is necessarily subject to contrariety and dissolution; and especially those which have solid and hard bodies. Either, therefore, no such animals as these were to have been created, or these inconveniencies tolerated: supposing always that their existence is a blessing to them, notwithstanding these inconveniencies, and that more good than evil accrues to them from the possession of it.

From hence it will appear how fruitful a source of evils this imperfection of creatures may be, and that from this head there flows a possibility of evil among the works of God, notwithstanding infinite power and goodness. How every particular evil may be reduced to this origin, shall be shewn (God willing) in the sequel.

In the interim who can doubt whether this source of all evils be itself to be called an evil? Evil is by many defined a privation of
good.

least good that could be produced. *Finite* goodness might possibly have been exhausted in creating the greater beings, but *infinite* extends to all. The infinite power and goodness of God then were the cause, why imperfect beings had existence,

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good. In this it agrees with defect or imperfection, and a man is called evil, or an action evil, which brings us into inconveniences, or is prejudicial to the author, or any other person. With how much more reason then may imperfection be called an evil, since it is the origin of all the evils we endure, or which arise in the mundane system.

But inanimate things, you say, are capable of neither good nor evil, and therefore it does not signify in what condition they be placed, sensible things only can be miserable. I answer, it is true inanimate creatures are not capable of some kind of evils, *viz.* pain, grief, or undue elections; but are there no other evils which they may be subject to? Who would not think himself ill dealt with, if he should be reduced to the state of an inanimate creature? He would feel no inconveniences, say you. I grant it, but this very not feeling is dreaded by us as one of the greatest of all evils. This deprivation of sense therefore, is far from being desirable, and consequently far from being good. To be deprived of sense is what we call an evil of *loss*, though it be not a sensible one.

If any one should take away a man's feeling by a blow or any other way, nay if he did not restore it to him when he had this in his power, would he not be mischievous and injurious to him, though the sufferer be not at all sensible of the injury? Now who can affirm that God could not have endowed every thing with sense, at least have joined a sensitive soul to every particle of matter? May we not complain therefore that he has not done it? Is it not equally disadvantageous for inanimate things never to have had sense, as for animated beings to be deprived of it?

And yet some are so perverse that they will not have this imperfection called an evil, though it really be as great an one as the other.

However, we must observe that inanimate things are not made for themselves, but for the use of such as are endowed with sense and reason, they have therefore a relative good or evil, both in regard to God, and to those creatures for whose use they were designed, and as far as they answer the end they were made for, we esteem them good, such as do otherwise are evil: of which good or evil there is no other ground but their perfection or imperfection.

The origin of evil is the same therefore in both sensitive and inanimate beings, *viz.* the absence of perfection.

existence, together with the more perfect. It is plain therefore, that the system of the world may be the *work of a Deity*, though it *has this fault*. Nay, that it was created is evident, for this very reason, because it is *imperfect*; for if it were *self-existent*, it would be *absolutely perfect* (24.)

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(24.) The chief argument of the foregoing chapter is beautifully illustrated by Mr. *Addison* in the *Spectator*, No. 519. As frequent use will be made of this observation concerning the *scale of beings*, I hope the reader will excuse my transcribing so much of the above-mentioned paper as is necessary to explain it:

‘ Infinite goodness is of so communicative a nature, that it seems to delight in the conferring of existence upon every degree of perceptive being. As this is a speculation which I have often pursued with great pleasure to myself, I shall enlarge farther upon it, by considering that part of the *scale of beings* which comes within our knowledge. There are some living creatures which are raised just above dead matter. To mention only the species of shell-fish, which are formed in fashion of a Cone, that grow to the surface of several rocks, and immediately die upon their being severed from the place where they grow. There are many other creatures but one remove from these, which have no other senses besides that of feeling and taste. Others have still an additional one of hearing, others of smell, and others of sight. It is wonderful to observe, by what a gradual progress the world of life advances through a prodigious variety of species, before a creature is formed that is complete in all its senses; and even among these is such a different degree of perfection, in the sense which one animal enjoys beyond what appears in another, that though the sense in different animals be distinguished by the same common denomination, it seems almost of a different nature. If after this we look into the several inward perfections, cunning and sagacity, or what we generally call *instinct**, we find them rising after the same manner imperceptibly one above another, and receiving additional improvements according to the species in which they are implanted. This progress in nature is so very gradual, that the most perfect of an inferior species comes very near to the most imperfect of that which is immediately above it. The exuberant and overflowing goodness of the supreme Being, whose mercy extends to all his works, is plainly seen, as I have before hinted from his having made so little matter, at least what falls within our knowledge, that does not swarm with life: nor

* To which we may add, *will and liberty*,
See Bayle’s Dict. p. 2609, 2610.

is his goodness less seen in the diversity than in the multitude of living creatures. Had he only made one species of animals, none of the rest would have enjoyed the happiness of existence; he has therefore specified in his creation every degree of life, every capacity of being. The whole chasm in nature, from a plant to a man, is filled up with diverse kinds of creatures, rising one over another, by such a gentle and easy ascent, that the little transitions and deviations from one species to another, are almost insensible. This intermediate space is so well husbanded and managed, that there is scarce a degree of perfection which does not appear in some one part of the world of life. Is the goodness or wisdom of the divine Being more manifested in this his proceeding? There is a consequence, besides those I have already mentioned, which seem very naturally deducible from the foregoing considerations. If the scale of being rises by such a regular progress, so high as man, we may, by a parity of reason, suppose that it still proceeds gradually through those beings which are of a superior nature to him; since there is an infinitely greater space and room for different degrees of perfection between the supreme being and man, than between man and the most despicable insect. This consequence of so great a variety of beings which are superior to us, from that variety which is inferior to us, is made by Mr. *Locke*, in a passage which I shall here set down, after having premised, that notwithstanding there is such infinity between man and his Maker for the creative power to exert itself in, it is impossible that it should ever be filled up, since there will be still an infinite gap or distance between the highest created being and the power which produced him.

The fine passage there cited from Mr. *Locke*, occurs in the 3d book of his Essay, chap. 6. §. 12.

See also notes, F. and 26.

From the foregoing observation, that there is no manner of chasm or void, no link deficient in this great chain of beings, and the reason of it, it will appear extremely probable also, that every distinct order, every class or species of them, is as full as the nature of it would admit, and God saw proper. There are (as our Author says) perhaps, so many in each class as could exist together without some inconvenience or uneasiness to each other. This is easily conceivable in mankind, and may be in superior beings, though, for want of an exact knowledge of their several natures and orders, we cannot apprehend the manner of it, or conceive how they affect one another; only this we are sure of, that neither the species, nor the individuals in each species, can possibly be infinite; and that nothing but an impossibility in the nature of the thing, or some greater inconvenience, can restrain the exercise of the power of God, or hinder him from producing still more and more beings capable of felicity. When we begin to enquire into the number of these and the degrees of their perfection, we soon lose ourselves, and can only refer all to the divine wisdom and goodness: From our previous notices of which attributes, we have the highest reason to conclude that every thing is as perfect as possible in its own kind, and that every system is in itself full and complete.



C H A P. IV.

Concerning Natural Evil.

S E C T. I.

Of Generation and Corruption.

IT appears from the foregoing observations that created beings must necessarily be *defective*, i. e. some must want the perfections which others have, and that it was impossible for them to enjoy either an absolute or equal perfection; also, that there is no occasion for an evil principle opposite to infinite goodness and power. And from hence we may affirm that God, though infinitely good and powerful, could not separate things from the concomitant evils of imperfection, and did not esteem it unbecoming himself to create the good, though that brought some evils along with it, so long as these evils are less than the good with which they are connected. Nor can the creature justly complain of its condition, if it have not all, or equal perfection with some others; since 'twas unnecessary that it should fill the station wherein it was placed, or none at all. This we have shewn sufficiently

A creature cannot complain of its fate though it be less perfect than others.

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I think

I think, in the former kind of evils, *viz.* those of *imperfection*.

The origin of things from matter, is the source of natural evils, as their rise from nothing is the cause of those of imperfections.

II. The same must be attempted in the second kind, *viz.* the *natural*. Now, as all-created beings are made out of *nothing*, and on that account are necessarily imperfect; so all natural things have a relation to, or arise from *matter*, and on this account are necessarily subjected to natural evils: nor is the rise of all created beings from nothing a more fruitful and certain cause of the evils of imperfection, than the rise of all natural things from matter is of all natural evils. (E.) If therefore we can shew that these

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(E.) The objection against this position stands thus. Not only generation and corruption are natural evils, but likewise pains of body and dissatisfaction of mind, disappointments of appetite, and death. Now it is manifest that all material beings are not subject to these, particularly man in paradise as to his body was material, and yet free from death, and all natural evils; and the same is true of the blessed in heaven. Since therefore material beings may be free from all natural evils, it follows that they are not necessarily subject to such because they are material, and consequently we must look for another origin of natural evils distinct from matter.

The answer to this objection, that seems to have so great force in it, is not difficult. 'Tis manifest from the book that when it affirms all material beings are liable to natural evils, it is not meant that they are always actually affected by them, but that they are capable of being so affected at certain times, and in certain circumstances; and yet their circumstances may perhaps be so ordered that they shall be always free from them.

For example, man in paradise was naturally mortal, and though we do not know what sort of body he had, yet we are sure that he had an appetite to eat and drink, and needed these to support him.

How then could he avoid pain, disappointment of appetite, and death? I answer by being placed in such circumstances that he should always have sufficient provision ready to satisfy his hunger and thirst, and such knowledge of all things that could hurt him, that he might easily avoid them. His blood was inflammable then as well as now, and consequently he was subject to a fever. His limbs might be broken and dis-jointed then as well as now, and that must disable him to manage his business, and disappoint a natural appetite of moving where his occasions required. But God gave him the tree of life as a remedy against all natural distempers and decays of body, and either such a prospect

these evils are so necessarily connected with this origin that they cannot be separated from it, it follows that the structure of the world either ought not to have been framed at all, or that these evils must have been tolerated without any imputation on the divine power and goodness. But it is better that they should be as they are, since they could not be more perfect. Let us examine the particular sorts of natural evils, and if there be nothing in them which could be removed without greater danger to nature, and introducing a larger train of evils, the divine goodness may securely applaud itself, since it has omitted no manner of good

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nor

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spect of what could hurt him as might enable him to avoid the occasion, or else if that happened he was restored by the use of the same tree of life. After all it doth not appear from scripture, that man in his innocency was secure from all natural evils, but only from such as might deprive him of life, or make that life uncomfortable to him. If any divines have gone farther it is mere conjecture, and no part either of the faith taught in scripture, or conveyed to us by the catholic church. The author of the origin of evil has given his thoughts concerning the estate of our first parents more fully in a discourse on *Gen. ii. 17*. Where he founds himself on the word of God and speaks conformably to the sense of the primitive and reformed churches, but it were too long to insert here.*

From what has been said already I suppose it is manifest, that the happiness of man in paradise is no argument against the position in the book, that all things material are liable to natural evils, to corruption and dissolution; and if united to a spiritual substance that has sense or reason, they make it likewise capable of pain, and of the dissatisfaction that arises from the disappointment of appetites.

As to the blessed in heaven, their case is much more easy to be accounted for, and I think those words of the 4th ch. f. 3. subf. 2. are sufficient. 'I answer, these bodies are not therefore immortal, because they are naturally incorruptible (for that would be inconsistent with the nature of that matter whereof they are composed) but because they are put into such places and circumstances by the deity, that they can even with pleasure foresee, and prevent all such things as tend to introduce either *corruption* or *pain*.' I am apt to think the objector either never read, or did not consider this when he made the objection.

* See the *sermon* annexed.

nor admitted any evil which could possibly be prevented, *i. e.* hath done in every thing what was best.

Matter is
useless, ex-
cept it
have mo-
tion.

III. God has accomplished this in the creation of *matter*, as we said before, nor has he been less beneficent in what relates to the *motion* of matter. In the first place, matter, though in itself unactive, is nevertheless capable of action, *viz. local motion*, which is the action that belongs to matter. But 'tis better that it should act as far as it is capable, than be entirely still and sluggish : if it were without motion, rigid and fixed in the same place, we cannot conceive what benefit it could be of either to itself or any thing else : but when it is put into motion, it may be of use, as is plain from experience ; though not always without a mixture of evils : but action is *ceteris paribus*, preferable to inactivity ; it is therefore agreeable to the divine goodness to produce motion in matter, if the good arising from thence do not overballance the evil, and so long as no evils are permitted which are separable from motion, nor such as can affect spirits, which are purely immaterial.

Such mo-
tion was
to be rais-
ed in
matter, as
might se-
parate it
into parts.
Hence the
genera-
tion and
corrup-
tion of
bodies.

IV. Now, if it be granted that God could, consistently with his goodness, both *create matter* and put it into *motion*, it necessarily follows that its motions must interfere with one another. If you say that matter might move uniformly and all together, either in a *direct line* or a *circle*, and the contrariety of motions by that means be prevented : I answer, the whole mass of matter would be no less rigid and useless with such a motion as this, than if it were entirely at rest ; it would neither be more fit for animals, nor more adapted to the uses which
it

it now answers. Such a motion therefore was to be excited in it, as would separate it into parts, make it fluid, and render it an habitation fit for animals. But that could not be without contrariety of motion, as any one that thinks of it at all will perceive : and if this be once admitted in *matter*, there necessarily follows a *division* and *disparity* of parts, *clashing* and *opposition*, *comminution*, *concretion* and *repulsion*, and all those evils which we behold in *generation* and *corruption*. God could indeed have removed all these from matter, by taking away its motion, but they are either to be tolerated, or matter must remain fixed and immoveable in the same situation. Some may ask, why God would not produce such motion in matter as might render all its concretions so perfect as not to be liable to *dissolution* or *corruption*. For since the power of God is infinite, nothing on his side hinders this from being done ; what hinders therefore on the side of matter ? I answer, its *motion* and *divisibility*. For if you suppose any sort of motion in matter, it must necessarily be either *useless*, as we said before, or in *opposite directions*. The mutual clashing of these concretions could therefore not be avoided, and as they strike upon one another, whether we suppose them hard or soft, a concussion of the parts and a separation from each other would be necessarily produced : but a separation or dissipation of the parts is *corruption*. This therefore could not be avoided without violence done to the laws of motion and the nature of matter. For to hinder moveable things from ever interfering, and the parts which are naturally separable from ever separating by

mutual impulses, would require a *perpetual miracle*. (25.)

V. Secondly,

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(25.) That is, there could be no general pre-established *laws of nature*, but God must continually interpose and effect every thing by his own direct and immediate power: the bad consequences of which are very obvious. There could be no *arts*, or *sciences*, or *skill* or *industry*; no regular methods of providing for our bodies, or improving our minds in the knowledge of things. All which evidently presuppose and are entirely founded on some settled, certain laws of the universe discoverable by us.

As a farther answer to the question, why does the Deity tie himself down to general laws; the following consideration seems worth attending to.

Without some general laws there could have been no place for the exercise of divine wisdom and contrivance in the creation of the world; or, at least, no such wisdom would have been visible to us. Wherein does the contrivance we so much admire in the solar system consist, but in such a proportion and disposition of the several bodies, which compose that system, with regard to their relative distances, velocities, orbits, &c. so as to be sustained in their regular courses by the influence of *one* general law of gravitation, and thereby to produce the particular purposes intended by them in due consistency with this law? Had there been no such law, or had not the Deity confined himself to it in the formation of this system, there would have been no wise contrivance for us to apprehend and admire. All art, or so far as we have any idea of art, consists in making the best of certain pre-established general laws, towards the effecting some particular purpose. When a mechanic sits down to provide a machine for some particular use, he has several materials before him endowed with certain general properties, which it is not in his power to alter: his ingenuity then appears in converting these general properties to his purpose, and in surmounting the impediments which the same properties cast in his way. Had there been no such fixed properties to deal with, or had he been able to alter and suspend them at his pleasure, there would have been no occasion for his ingenuity to exert itself.

All cases into which art or ingenuity enter, presuppose certain principles to be fixed and unalterable and to produce the effect intended out of these general principles, and in consistency with these laws, is the very thing in which the art or ingenuity are exerted and may be discovered. As this is true of all contrivances, of which we have any knowledge, it seems applicable to the divine conduct in the productions of nature. In the work of creation we may conceive the divine will, to have first of all fixed upon certain general rules, that is, to have imparted to the substances employed by him certain common properties (as attraction, cohesion, action, electricity, &c. to matter) and to have subjected these to certain universal laws: and then the problem

V. Secondly, Since it is proper that matter should be put into motion, 'tis better that this should be done according to some certain laws and in an orderly course, than at random, and as it were by chance. For by this means the systems composed of matter will have both more durable and more regular periods. The evil arising from matter was, we said, the *jarring* of elements; from hence comes this corruption and dissolution, instability and vicissitude. It may be surprizing, that all these should proceed from a stable, fixed and uniform good. But we have made it appear that matter could not move at all without these, and it was more eligible that the world should be liable to them, than destitute of animals. And that these evils should not multiply beyond necessity the divine goodness has taken care, by restraining its motion under certain laws, so as to make it steady, and as constant as could be; so that the machines composed of it might be as little shocked with contrary motions as possible, and endure for a long time; nay some

Motion under certain laws tends more to the preservation of things, than if it were left at random. Hence God distributed bodies into various systems.

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blem was how to produce such a world as this is out of these same principles and in consistency with these laws. Here was room for supreme wisdom and contrivance. And so often as we can trace any particular phenomenon to a general principle, and discern the circuit by which that principle is made to bring about the effect in consistency with the laws to which the same principle is subjected, we are said to comprehend the contrivance, and are ready to acknowledge the contriver's wisdom.

Why the present laws of nature should have been established in preference to all others, we perhaps can give no account; but we may assign the above among other reasons for establishing some general rules in nature; and the present laws having once been established, we can discern the consummate skill and address of the creator in converting them to the production of such a variety of very beneficial effects. Concerning the necessity of the present laws of motion, and the fitness of them to attain the intended purposes, see Dr. *J. Clarke on natural evil*, p. 92, &c. and 150, 153.

of them in certain places and circumstances for ever. For if no parcels of matter were directed by any certain and determinate rule, such a confused motion would jumble every thing together, nor could any thing last for ever so short a time. On this account God established certain laws of motion, and perpetual rules; and framed the great mass of beings into certain machines and systems, which have such an exact correspondence as to contribute their mutual assistance towards preserving the motion and order prescribed by the deity. (F) Neither was it convenient that matter should every where consist of the same kind of parts; but rather that it should be in one place very fluid, similar and homogeneous, such as we believe the *Æther* to be; in another, solid and

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(F.) 'Tis objected that the author avoids the chief difficulty, and which stood most in need of an answer. For he supposes certain general laws upon the establishment whereof evils must necessarily invade the works of God; but he does not tell us why God established these laws, which must bring so great evils along with them: could not an omnipotent, all-knowing and absolutely good God have made other laws free from all these defects? Why did he bind himself to such universal rules? Could he not have interposed his omnipotence and dispensed with these laws, and thereby prevented every evil which would arise from the observance of them? The author is silent on this head.

But it is evident that the author had these difficulties in view, and has given a proper reply to each. Wherever he has mentioned any universal law, he shews that it arises from the very nature and constitution of things, and that a better could not possibly be made, nor one which is more necessary for the preservation of those beings to which it is given: and that it could not be dispensed with, at least frequently, without detriment to the whole.

If therefore all the fault must needs be laid upon God; yet he is not to be blamed for fixing such general laws, but rather for making such imperfect creatures, which necessarily required these laws and were incapable of better. This is the true state of the question, and of this the author has also given an account in the foregoing chapter. See note (E.)

* See c. 5. § 5. subf. 3.

and compact, as the earth is, and perhaps the stars; in another, mixed with heterogeneous particles, such as we find the air and water.

VI. We must confess that such a mass as the earth is, seems not so beautiful or so fit for motion, as the pure fluid *Æther*; 'tis also more liable to corruption and changes; yet it is most certain that the earth was not constituted in this manner for no reason at all, or unnecessarily: perhaps the *mundane* system could no more consist without these solid masses, than the human body without bones. No sober man doubts but God could have disposed this material world into other systems; and of what kind soever these had been, our reason could never have comprehended the contrivance of them. For, since our planetary system is incomprehensible to us, much more will the fabric of the whole universe be so; but as far as we do understand the disposition of it, all is well, elegant and beautiful: and if, among all the phenomena of nature, we were only acquainted with light, that would shew us the just and admirable structure of it. It is reasonable therefore to believe that this is the very best, and attended with the least inconveniencies.

VII. You'll say that some particular things might have been better. But, since you do not thoroughly understand the whole, you have no right to affirm thus much. We have much greater reason to presume that no one part of it could be changed for the better, without greater detriment to the rest, which it would either be inconsistent with, or disfigure by its disproportion.* For we have shewn before,

It appears from light and other phenomena, that the systems of the universe are very good and beautiful.

'Tis rash to affirm that matter might be distributed into better systems since we do not thoroughly understand the present.

† See note 28.

that

that all manner of inconveniencies could not be avoided, because of the imperfection of matter, and the nature of motion. That state of things was therefore preferable, which was attended with the fewest and least inconveniencies. And who but a very harsh, indiscreet person will affirm that God has not actually made choice of this? Nay, who can do it with any shadow of reason, unless he thoroughly understands both this and that other which he would prefer to it? Whoever pronounces upon them before this, gives sentence before he has looked into the cause, and is at the same time both a partial and an incompetent judge.

It concerned us the more to have this well explained, that being convinced of the convenience or *meliority* of the whole material system, we may more easily perceive the origin of those evils which necessarily follow from the *contrariety* of motion and the *corruption* of things.

S E C T. II.

Concerning Animals and the Variety of them.

SINCE matter is not self-conscious, nor able to enjoy itself, nor capable of receiving any benefit from itself, it follows that it was not made for itself, but for something else, to which it was to be subservient in sensation, thought or fruition. We find by experience that matter can be thus serviceable to a thinking being, though stupid and insensible itself: 'tis probable therefore that God designed and directed all matter to this end as far as was possible. Hence comes the union of sensible and thinking beings with the particles of matter, as we experience in ourselves. The same may be said of all its parts, as far as the order and constitution of things allowed. There is nothing therefore in vain, nothing idle, nor any region without its animals. For supposing, as we said, so many pure spirits separate from matter, to be made as were convenient; as these occupy no place*, there

Matter does not seem to be made for its own sake since it is not self-conscious, 'tis therefore designed for the use of animals.

* See note 7.

would

would be no less room for other thinking sensible substances that stood in need of matter for the exercise of their faculties, and enjoyment of themselves, which for the future let us call *souls*. (G.)

II. Now

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(G.) The author has endeavoured to account for this *variety* of creatures in the following manner. All beings could not be placed in the same degree of happiness, or in the same order of perfection, neither could all the same order be in the same degree, or enjoy the same conveniencies. The good of the whole would not allow it. For instance, suppose a certain order of intelligent creatures made by God, which have a mutual intercourse, and stand in need of each others assistance to promote the common happiness, which they are obliged to promote with united powers and inclinations. 'Tis plain, that there's a necessity for government among them; for as they have appetites and choice, and a limited understanding, 'tis impossible for them to administer the affairs of the public (in which the good of all consists) by the same means, at the same time, and with a joint endeavour, without devolving a right to determine these things on some one or more persons. Whence arises a necessity for rule or government among such reasonable creatures. Nor could it be avoided where there is both a mutual intercourse and a limited understanding. On which account the same is observable among the angels themselves. But now 'tis plain, that those who happen to have this government over such as are naturally their equals, are in better circumstances with regard to externals, than those which have only the honour of obeying. They may with greater certainty and ease, and in more cases, obtain their ends, effect their choice, and accomplish their desires (*i. e.* be happy) than those which are obliged to postpone the gratification of their senses and the execution of their designs, and absolutely conform themselves to another's will, which they must necessarily do who are subject to the rule of others. And yet it is impossible that this should be every one's lot. 'Tis impossible all should be rulers and none subjects.

From this example we see how the relations which creatures have to one another, may put a restraint even on infinite power, so that it will be a contradiction for them while they keep the nature which they have at present, to be in some respects otherwise disposed than they now are, nor can all of the same order be gratified with the same conveniencies. From hence it follows either that a God of infinite wisdom and goodness, is obliged by these attributes to restrain his power from creating any such creatures, or that he must assign them stations very distant from the highest happiness which they are capable of. Hence also it appears, why all things do not answer every one's appetite. Why are we not enriched with as many benefits as the capacity of our nature seems to require. For though the infinite
good-

II. Now, since the structure of this visible world consist of various bodies, viz. pure Æther, Air, Earth, &c. 'tis highly probable, as we said before, that each of these has its proper inhabitants, viz. by the union of souls with parcels of matter. Without such an union, we cannot comprehend how there should be either Æthereal or Aerial animals. For the most fluid bodies if not united to an immaterial soul, or compacted together, would be immediately dissolved, and every blast of wind would dissipate such animals: either then these vast fields of air or æther must be entirely destitute of inhabitants, which very few will believe, who behold every clod of earth stocked with animals; or furnished after some such manner as we conjecture. (26.) If
you

'Tis probable that animals vary according to the variety of those regions which they are destined to inhabit: Therefore the Æther and Air in all probability have their proper inhabitants as well as the Earth.

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goodness of God encourages us to promise ourselves thus much, yet wisdom and justice set bounds as it were to his goodness and shew that this cannot be done without detriment to the whole; that either this inconvenience must be tolerated, or no such creatures made; and that it was better not to give some so great a degree of happiness as their natures might receive, than that a whole species of beings should be wanting to the world.

If it be asked why God did not make this species in another and more perfect manner, so as to be free from this inconvenience, I answer, that then it would have belonged to another species, and been of a different order of creatures: and I suppose as many of the species to be made already as the system would admit, but that there was still room for these inferior ones, which must necessarily have had the nature they now are of, or none at all, as has been often said, and I'm unwillingly oblig'd to repeat it.

(26.) We have a beautiful description of our author's conjecture in the *Spectator*, No. 519. which deserves a place here. If we consider those parts of the material world which lie the nearest to us, and are therefore subject to our observations and enquiries, it is amazing to consider the infinity of animals with which it is stocked. Every part of matter is peopled; every green leaf swarms with inhabitants. There is scarce a single humour in the body of man, or of any other animal, in which our glasses do not discover myriads of living creatures. The surface of animals is also covered with other ani-
"mals

you say, here's room for pure spirits. I answer; since these do not fill up place, nor have any relation to it, 'tis the same thing wherever they be, and material substances have nothing at all to do with them: it is not therefore necessary to suppose such large tracts of air or æther void of animals, in order to make room for these, for which it would be no less commodious, if replenished with, than if destitute of animals. If then this be granted us, we may affirm that there is as great variety of souls, as of animals; and that it is one species which exerts its operations by the help of ætherial matter, and another

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‘mals, which are in the same manner the basis of other animals that live upon it; nay, we find in the most solid bodies, as in marble itself, innumerable cells and cavities that are crowded with such imperceptible inhabitants, as are too little for the naked eye to discover. On the other hand, if we look into the more bulky parts of nature, we see the seas, lakes and rivers, teeming with numberless kinds of living creatures: we find every mountain and marsh, wilderness and wood, plentifully stocked with birds and beasts, and every part of matter affording proper necessities and conveniencies for the livelihood of multitudes which inhabit it. The author of the *Plurality of Worlds* draws a very good argument from this consideration, for the *peopling* of every planet; as indeed it seems very probable from the analogy of reason, and that if no part of matter which we are acquainted with, lies waste and useless, those great bodies which are at such a distance from us, should not be desert and unpeopled, but rather that they should be furnished with beings adapted to their respective situations. *Existence* is a blessing to those beings only which are endowed with perception, and is in a manner thrown away upon dead matter, any farther than as it is subservient to beings which are conscious of their existence. Accordingly we find from the bodies which lie under our observation, that matter is only made as the basis and support of animals, and there is no more of the one than what is necessary for the existence of the other.’ See also Dr. *Scott's* works, vol. 2. disc. 13. p. 308, &c. fol. How closely the vegetable and animal kingdoms are united may be seen in the authors referred to in app. to *considerations* on the theory of religion, N. K. p. 419, 5th edit. Nay, that a chain of animal life and some degree of perception is probably continued through the whole vegetable and mineral kingdoms See Prof. *Watson's* Essay on the subject of chemistry, printed A. D. 1771.

ther which stands in need of aerial, and a third of terrestrial. Neither will every element be fit for every animal, but each will have its proper inhabitants : nor can there be any just cause of complaint that they are uneasy out of their proper element, that men cannot live any while commodiously in æther, nor perhaps ætherial animals upon the earth : for its sufficient if every one nourishes its proper inhabitants, according to the nature and constitution of each.

III. That is a foolish objection therefore of the *Epicurean Lucretius**, that the world owes not its original to a divine power and goodness, because mountains, woods and rocks, large fens, and the ocean cover so great a share of it : that the *burning heat*, viz. of the *torrid zone*, and the *eternal frost*, viz. of the two *frigid*, take up almost two parts of it ; since the sea, the rocks, winds and mountains are not entirely useless in their present situation ; which was requisite for the good of the universe, and the order of the mundane system. Neither was the earth or its inhabitants to be regarded in the first place. For, since it is but a small part of the whole, and almost a point, where would have been the wonder if it had not been fit for any inhabitants at all ? If it did but promote the good of the whole, while itself was barren and empty. If this had been the case, it would not have proved an useless part of the world, any more than a nail is of a man's body ; and it as absurd to desire that all parts

The earth as being the least part of the mundane system is not to be chiefly regarded but yet is not made to no purpose or without design.

or

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* See *Bentley's* eighth sermon § 10. p. 329 5th edit. or *Bates on the existence of God*, &c. chap. 1, 2, and 3. or *Cockburn's* essays, 1st part. ess. 7. par. 5, &c. and 2 part, ess. 4. par. 5, &c. and the authors mentioned in note 38.

of the universe should immediately afford habitation to animals, as that every part and member of an animated body should by itself constitute an animal; 'tis sufficient if every particular member conspire with the rest, and exercise its own own proper function, and consequently that the earth, which is a member of the universe, have its peculiar use in promoting the good of the whole. If therefore the whole earth was serviceable, not to preserve animals, but only motion, nothing could be objected from thence against the goodness of its author. Neither would it appear strange to any that considers the immensity of the works of God, and how minute a portion of them the earth is, if it were entirely destitute of inhabitants: nor would it therefore be vain. How much more then may we admire the goodness and wisdom of God therein, who has filled the whole and every part of it with life.

The earth may be conceived as a wheel in this automaton of the world without which its motion would be defective: in the interim it affords an habitation and food to animals.

IV. He knew best what creatures every part of it was fit for, and has assigned to each its proper place, as is evident to every observer: the mountains, the woods, the rocks, the seas, have their proper inhabitants which they supply with nourishment. The system of the world required a globe of solid matter such as the earth is, and we have reason to believe that this is, as it were, a wheel in the automaton, without which its motion would be imperfect. But besides this principal end, the divine wisdom saw that it might serve for nutriment to several kinds of animals, that no manner of good therefore might be omitted which was consistent with the primary end, he filled it with all these animals that
it

it was capable of, nor could the earth afford sustenance to any superior or more proper beings. God has given those parts to the brutes which are unfit for men; and that there might be nothing useless, which yet could not be altered without detriment to the whole, he has adapted animals to every part and region of it; and since the habitations could not conveniently be converted into any other form, he provided such animals as wanted and were agreeable to these habitations. Hence mountains, woods and rocks give harbour to wild beasts, the sea to fishes, the earth to insects. Neither ought we to complain that the whole earth is not of use to man, since that was not the principle end it was made for; but, on the contrary, man was for this reason placed upon the earth, because it afforded a convenient receptacle for him. And what if it had been totally unfit for man? would it therefore have been in vain? by no means. On the contrary, we are certain that God would have given it other inhabitants, to whose maintenance it might have been subservient, (27.)

V, Those

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(27.) Our author's argument here might be carried much farther, and the infinite wisdom of the Creator demonstrated not only from his having made nothing in vain, or useless in *itself*, but also from the distinct and *various* relations which every thing bears to *others*, and the joint contribution of each part to the good of the whole: from the double, the *manifold* apparent *uses* of almost every thing in nature.

Thus the mountains mentioned in the objection of *Lucretius*, and which many moderns have also misrepresented as deformities of nature, have not only their own peculiar inhabitants, but also afford to other animals the most commodious harbour and maintenance, the best remedies and retreats. To them we owe the most pleasant prospects, the most delicious wines, the most curious vegetables, the richest and most useful metals, minerals, and other

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fossils;

The earth
is made
not for
man alone
but for the
universe:
to think
otherwise
favours of
human
pride.

V. Those therefore who urge the unsuitness of certain parts of the earth for the sustenance of man, as a fault and defect of the divine skill in making them, are obliged to prove that the earth was made for the sake of mankind only, and not of the universe; and that every thing in the world is useless which does not immediately tend

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fossils; and, what is more than all, a wholesome air, and the convenience of fountains and navigable rivers.

The ocean, besides the support of its own inhabitants (which are, in all probability, as numerous and various as those of the earth) provides also vast quantities of vapours, which refresh and fructify the earth itself, and nourish and support its inhabitants, producing springs, lakes and rivers. The lesser seas, fens and lakes, are so well distributed throughout the globe, as to afford sufficient vapours for clouds and rains to temper the cold of the northern air, to cool and mitigate the heats of the torrid zone, and refresh the whole earth with fertile showers: As is fully proved by *Derham* *.

As to the variety of uses which the same thing is rendered capable of, and manifestly designed for by its All-wise author, see *Colliber's Impartial Enquiry into the Existence, &c. of God*, p. 20. 'To obtain a great number of ends by as few means as may be, is the highest point of wisdom. But nothing can be imagined more admirable in this respect than the present frame of things. Thus though the human body is composed of a great variety of parts, yet how much more numerous are their uses? how many are the uses of the hand, which directed by reason is instead of all other instruments? how many advantages do we owe to the eye, the ear, and the tongue? and if we take a deeper view, and look into the minuter parts of which these are compounded, what can be more admirable than the variety of aims and intentions that may be observed in each? The several uses of the structure and position of each single muscle have been computed by *Galen* in his book *de Formatione Fetus* to be no less than ten. The like may be observed with reference to the bones and other similar parts, but especially with respect to the members of such as are heterogeneous or dissimilar.' p. 31.

The same is shewn at large by *Dr Grew, Cosmologia Sacra*. B. 1. C. 5. par. 13, 14, &c. or *W. Scott on the Wisdom and Goodness of God*, Sermp. 3. p. 75. &c. or *Bp. Wilkins Princ. of Nat. Relig.* C. 6.

* *Physico-Theol.* B. 2. C. 5. & B. 3. C. 4.

tend to the use of man. But this is absurd, and what no one would object, who is not blinded with pride and ignorance*. We ought rather to admire the power and goodness of God who has so tempered his works, though they be immense and infinitely various, that there is nothing in them which exists not in the very best manner with respect to the whole, and which he has not replenished with its proper inhabitants. And since the variety of the constituent parts and regions of the earth is no greater than the nature of the whole machine required, nor the species of animals fewer than the food would supply, we must conclude there is nothing deficient or redundant. (28.)

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(28.) Hence I think we may safely conclude with our author in general, that there could have been no *partial* alteration of this system, but for the worse, so far as we know; at least not for the better. They who hold that there might have been a *total* one, that the whole scheme of things might possibly have been altered or reversed, and that either the direct contrary, or a quite different one, would have been more worthy of God; the men, I say, that hold this, are obliged to shew the possibility of conceiving it, and to explain the manner how it may be effected, before we are obliged to believe them. They must shew that the same things which are now conducive to our happiness, and consequently the objects of our love, might as easily have tended to our misery; and consequently have been as reasonably the objects of our aversion; that the same passions, objects, exercises, and inclinations which now create pleasure in us, might have produced a different, a quite contrary effect, or no effect at all. This they are obliged to do: and when they have done all this, and compleated their system, and made a total alteration of things, as they imagine, for the better, they are at last only got to the above mentioned absurdity of putting this system into a higher *class*, whereas all the different classes in every conceivable degree of perfection, were supposed to be entirely filled at the first. We must therefore take things as they are, and argue only from the present nature of them collectively; in which view we shall find no possible alteration of any thing, but what would produce the same or greater inconveniences, either in

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justif.

* See note 22.

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itself, or others, to which it bears a strict relation. Instances of this kind are every where to be met with: particular proofs of it in the natural world, occur in *Bentley's Boyle's Lect.* particularly with regard to the five senses of the human body, p. 95, 96. [See also *Locke on Human Understanding*, B. 2. C. 23. §. 12.] with respect to the figure and stature of it, in *Grew's Chymologia Sacra*, B. 1. C. 5. §. 25, &c. and to the several parts of it, all over *Boyle's*, *Cheyne*, *Derham*, *Newentyt*, *Ray*, *Cockburn*, *Edwards*, *W. Scott*, or *Pelling*.

The same might easily be shewn in the immaterial world, and in the most exceptionable part of it, viz. the soul of man, its knowledge, freedom, affections †.

I shall take the liberty to borrow a section from *Maxwell's* general remarks on *Cumberland*, C. 5. which sets this subject in a very good light. "The nature of things in the natural world is so exactly fitted to the natural faculties and dispositions of mankind, that were any thing in it otherwise than it is, even in degree, mankind would be less happy than they now are. Thus the dependence of all natural effects upon a few simple principles, is wonderfully advantageous in many respects. The degrees of all the sensible pleasures are exactly suited to the use of each; so that if we enjoyed any of them in a greater degree, we should be less happy: for our appetites of those pleasures would by that means be too strong for our reason; and, as we are framed, tempt us to an immoderate enjoyment of them, so as to prejudice our bodies. And where we enjoy some of them in so high a degree, as that it is in many cases very difficult for the strongest reason to regulate and moderate the appetites of such pleasures, it is in such instances where it was necessary to counterpoise some disadvantages, which are the consequences of the pursuit of those pleasures. Thus the pleasing ideas which accompany the love of the sexes, are necessary to be possessed in so high a degree, to balance the cares of matrimony, and also the pains of child-bearing in the female sex. The same may be said of our intellectual pleasures. Thus did we receive a greater pleasure from benevolence, sloth would be encouraged by an immoderate bounty. And were the pleasures of our enquiries into the truth greater, we should be too speculative and less active. It seems also probable, that the degree of our intellectual capacity is very well suited to our objects of knowledge, and that had we a greater degree thereof, all other things remaining as they are, we should be less happy. Moreover, it is probably so adapted to the frame of our bodies, that it could not be greater, without either an alteration in the laws of nature, or in the laws of union between the soul and body. Farther; were it much greater than it is, our thoughts and pursuits would be so spiritual and re-

"fin'd,

* On Final Causes.

† See Sir M. Hale's *Prim. Orig. of Mank.* C. 2. *De Homine*, p. 52.

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11 fixed, that we should be taken too much off from the sensible
 12 pleasures: we should probably be conscious of some defects or
 13 wants in our bodily organs, and would be sensible that they
 14 were unequal to so great a capacity, which would necessarily
 15 be followed by uneasiness of mind. And this seems to hold in
 16 the brute creation: For, methinks it would be for the disadvan-
 17 tage of a horse, to be endowed with the understanding of a
 18 man; such an unequal union must be attended with continual
 19 disquietudes and discontents. As for our pains, they are all
 20 either warnings against bodily disorders, or such as, had we
 21 wanted them, the laws of nature remaining as they are, we
 22 should either have wanted some pleasures we now enjoy, or
 23 have possessed them in a less degree. Those things in nature
 24 which we cannot reconcile to the foregoing opinion, as being
 25 ignorant of their use, we have good reason from analogy to be-
 26 lieve; are really advantageous; and adapted to the happiness of
 27 the intelligent beings of the system: though we have not so
 28 full and complete a knowledge of the entire system; as to be
 29 able to point out their particular uses. From these observations
 30 we may conclude, that all the various parts of our system are so
 31 admirably suited to one another, and the whole contrived with
 32 such exquisite wisdom, that were any thing, in any part there-
 33 of, in the least otherwise than it is, without an alteration in
 34 the whole, there would be a less sum of happiness in the system
 35 than there now is."

See also the author of the *Nature and conduct of the Passions*,
 p. 179, 201, 202.

But this will be more fully considered in the 4th section.

SECT. III.

Of Death.

WE know by experience that souls united
 to bodies move them some way or other;
 viz. by thought and volition: for thus we move
 our own. And it is probable that the gravity,
 solidity, and hardness of our bodies, together
 with the resistance of the adjacent ones, are the
 causes

'Tis prob-
 able that
 the solidity
 of our bod-
 ies is the
 cause why
 we move
 them not
 whither we
 please.

causes why we cannot move them every way as we please.

A soul united to a portion of æthereal matter, &c. can move it whither it will, and preserve its union, such a body therefore is immortal.

II. A soul when united to a portion of ethereal, uniform, and perfectly fluid matter, free from the impediment of gravity and resistance, may in all probability move its body whithersoever it pleases. Such a body therefore would be perfectly obsequious to the thought and will of the soul that inhabits it: and if it received any detriment from the neighbouring bodies, it could repair it by its will alone; at least so long as the Æther continued in its fluidity and purity. Unless the animal therefore willed the contrary, its body would be *incorruptible*, and always fit for union, *i. e. immortal*. If any one object that the bodies of the blessed, which we call *celestial*, need no motion or change of condition, since they enjoy continual pleasure; for no one moves or changes his state, but in order to remove some present uneasiness. I answer; these bodies are not therefore immortal, because they are naturally incorruptible (for that would be incompatible with the nature of that matter whereof they are composed) but because they are put into such places and circumstances by the Deity, that they can, even with pleasure, foresee and prevent all such things as might tend to introduce either *corruption* or *pain*. Neither does their pleasure or happiness consist in rest properly so called, but in activity, in such acts and exercise of their faculties as they choose: now, since they may exercise themselves perpetually according to their own choice, and there is nothing to hinder them, they may be perpetually happy; as will be declared below. All which are different in solid bodies.

III. We

III. We cannot certainly determine what life is in these animals which have solid bodies; but we sufficiently apprehend *where* it is, from certain marks and tokens. For where there is a circular motion of the fluids, there is a nutrition and increase, there is, as I conjecture, some sort of life. Now it is evident that this circular motion may be interrupted by the force of the adjacent bodies: the solid body of an animal is a kind of vessel in which the humours have a flux and reflux through certain ducts and channels framed by divine skill, in the motion of which life consists. Now this vessel may be broke in pieces by the impulse of other bodies, since by the native imperfection of matter it is capable of dissolution: but when the vessel is broken, the fluids therein contained must necessarily flow out, the circular motion must cease, and together with it animal life. Such animals therefore as have solid bodies, are by nature mortal, and cannot last for ever, without violence done to the laws of nature, of matter, and motion. There must then have been either none at all created, or such as are naturally mortal. The imperfection of matter could not suffer it to be otherwise. For the hard and solid parts belonging to these bodies are of such a frame as must necessarily be shaken and separated by others of the same bulk and hardness. Every thing therefore that consists of such kind of parts, may be corrupted and dissolved. (29.) Therefore the
divine

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(29.) This point is very well illustrated by Dr. J. Clarke on *Natural Evil*, p. 245, &c. whose reasoning is built upon Sir I. Newton's experiments. "Human bodies as well as those of all
" other

divine power and goodness did the very best even in creating beings that were mortal: for an animal subject to death is better than none at all.

This hypothesis reconciled with sacred history, concerning the immortality of the first man.

IV. But God, you will say, created man at first immortal, as we understand by sacred history: mortality is not therefore an inseparable attendant on solid bodies. I answer; it does not appear to us of what sort the bodies of mankind were before the fall, and consequently nothing can be argued from thence against the necessary mortality of all terrestrial ones. Farther, we should

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“ other animals, and of plants, are compounded of very different materials, fixed and volatile, fluid and solid; as appears by the resolution of them into their constituent parts; and they are nourished in the same manner, *viz.* by attraction. For as a sponge by suction draws in water, so the glands in the bodies of all animals draw different juices out of the blood, according to the particular nature and constitution of each of them: so long therefore as the nourishment is proper to assimilate itself to the several parts of the body, as it approaches them in its several channels; or so long as the solid particles (suppose of salts, which are absolutely necessary to the preservation of all creatures) retain their form and texture; so long is life preserved and maintained. And when the nourishment becomes unfit to assimilate; or the saline particles (which towards the center are very dense, and therefore capable of strongly attracting the fluids to them) lose their power of attraction, either by being divided into less particles (as they may be by the watry parts insinuating themselves into their pores with a gentle heat) or else by having those watry parts violently separated from them: in either of these cases all their motion will cease, and end in corruption, confusion and death. And this is abundantly confirmed by experience, in that every thing which is corrupted or putrified is of a black colour; which shews, that the component particles are broken to pieces, and reduced so small, as to be unable even to reflect the rays of light. Thus we see that death, or the dissolution of the body, is the necessary consequence of those laws by which it is framed and generated: and therefore is not in itself properly an *evil*, any more than that fabric can be filed *ill*, the materials, or manner of building of which, would not permit it to last a thousand years, nor was originally intended to continue half so long.”

should remember that our first parents were naturally mortal; but that God covenanted with them for immortality as a matter of favour, and upon particular conditions. Not that they should have continued upon earth for ever; but that God promised to translate them at a proper time by his especial favour, and preserve them in a place fit for the enjoyment of eternity: as we believe he did with *Enoch* and *Elias*. But as soon as this covenant with God was broken by sin, man was restored to his native mortality, and subjected to those other inconveniences to which the order of nature, and the chain of natural causes, rendered such bodies as these of mankind obnoxious. For though God has not so far tied himself up to the laws of nature, but that he may in many cases suspend and supersede them; yet this is not done frequently, nor to be expected for the sake of sinners. God can indeed preserve man from *actual death*; but that a solid machine consisting of heterogeneous parts, such as the human body is, should not be *naturally mortal*, is impossible: It is a contradiction therefore, that man, in the present state of things, should be by nature immortal. (H.)

S E C T.

N O T E S.

(H) All the objections brought against this section are, that the author maintains some things in it which destroy his own hypothesis. He holds that a soul united to an æthereal, uniform matter, perfectly fluid and without weight or resistance, may transport its body where it pleases, and if it receive any damage from the neighbouring bodies it may repair it again, by the power that the will of such a creature has over its own body: so if it please it may be immortal. From whence the objector concludes, that according to the author, there is no connection between a creature made of matter and mortality or any natural evils.

But surely this is raising objections against a book before one has read it. For if he had read it, he might have seen that the
author

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author expressly affirms that those bodies are not immortal, because incorruptible by nature (for the matter of which they consist will not permit them to be so) but because they are placed in stations and circumstances, in which they may foreknow and prevent with pleasure all those things which cause corruption or pain. From whence it is manifest that the author supposes these bodies to be corruptible, as well as our earthly ones, but it does not follow from thence that they must be corrupted. There is a great difference between the power and act; nor is it a good consequence, this is capable of being corrupted, therefore it must be actually so. The circumstances plainly make the difference between bodies of this sort and ours that are solid, heavy and heterogeneous, subject to the shock and impulse of others that are likewise hard, heavy, &c.

But then, *2dly*, the objector alledges, that this might not be so; for, how knows any one that such compositions as these have any more malignity in them than subtil uniform bodies? *Answer*. If by malignity be meant actual corruption, every one must see that these are more liable to it than the other: that a heavy body cannot be moved with the facility that a body exempt from gravity can; that a certain portion of matter to which the soul is immediately united, and which it uses in sensation, will become unfit for it when it is dissipated or mixed with heterogeneous particles, and that in the earth it must meet with such, whereas there are no such particles to mix with it in an uniform æther.

The knowledge or power of our first parents, if they had continued in their innocence, could not have prevented all effects of these mixtures; though God out of particular favour would have preserved them from the worst and most mischievous, which are reckoned up in the book*, and this but for a time, 'till he found it convenient to translate them to a better place. Though after all, we know not how the bodies of our first parents were framed; or what alterations were introduced on their sinning, and therefore no good argument can be taken from thence.

But, *3dly*, It is pretended, that to say, on man's sinning God abandoned him to his natural mortality, and to the other inconveniences that necessarily follow the laws of nature, is a sort of contradiction. For if there be a natural necessity that man should be exposed to pains and death, his innocence could not protect him from them.

But this is still to confute books without reading them. The author does not say that death or corruption necessarily follow the laws of nature, but only that they are the effects of these same laws when left to themselves, which God did not think fit to do in all things whilst man continued innocent.

Nor, lastly, does it follow from thence, as pretended, that matter is indifferent to the dissolution or continuance of itself, and only determined to one or other as the Creator pleases. For the possibility of corruption is inherent in all matter, as such, but whether it shall in all times and places actually be corrupted depends on the pleasure of God, and in many cases on the pleasure of other agents, and that the matter of human bodies in their present circumstances should not be so corrupted, is impossible.

* Sect. 9. par. 5.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Passions.

SUPPOSING the union of a thinking or sensitive soul with matter, its thought and will must necessarily be affected by the motions of that, as body must be again by these. For since the soul is of such a nature as to require matter of a peculiar *crasis* and *figure*, in order to discharge its functions, it follows that when this disposition is faulty, or quite fails, the operations of the soul must be impeded, or entirely cease; nor can it possibly be otherwise while the soul and body are of such a nature as they really are.

Our souls require bodies of a peculiar *crasis*, when that is disordered or removed, the operations of the soul are either hindered or destroyed.

II. Since, therefore, it is no diminution of the divine goodness to have assigned such a nature to them, as was shewn before; we must also admit of a mutual sympathy between them. Now, if they mutually affect each other, the consequence will be that it is the principal business of the soul to preserve the body from harm. In order to this, it is necessary that the soul have a perception of what is good for, or prejudicial to the body; and this could not be more effectually procured, than by providing that those things which tend to its preservation should communicate an agreeable sensation to the soul, and what is pernicious, a disagreeable one. For otherwise, the first thing we met with might destroy us, while we were unaware or regardless of it: nor should we be solicitous to avoid a river or a precipice.

The soul and body admit of a mutual sympathy: hence it is the first care of the soul to keep the body free from harm.

III. It is necessary, therefore, that the soul and body should affect each other mutually; that the impairing or dissolution of the body should create uneasiness, which, by its importunity, might recall the soul that was indisposed,

The sense of pain is necessary to preserve life, as also the dread of death.

posed, or otherwise engaged, to take care of the whole; nor ought it to cease urging, till what was hurtful be removed: without this importunity, perhaps, the strongest animal would not last even a day. The sense then of pain or uneasiness produced in the soul upon the mutilation or dissolution of the body, is necessary for the preservation of life in the present state of things. It may be proved from the same principles, that the aversion to, or dread of *death*, is not in vain, since it cannot even be conceived how a frail and mortal body, tossed by continual motions, and tumbled among other hard bodies, should escape dissolution, if the soul which moves that body were not forewarned to avoid death by the natural horror of its approach. (I.)

IV. Now

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(I.) Here the enemies of the unity of God, (*i. e.* the advocates for an evil principle) alledge, that they are satisfied, that matter must be moveable, that a body composed of solid and heavy parts, as ours are, environed with other bodies in continual agitation and perpetually liable to their shock, must be also subject to be broken and dissolved; but then why should such separation and dissolution cause uneasy sentiments in us? It is true, if a man be benighted in a wilderness and deprived of light, he may fall into a pit and break his bones; if he fall asleep, the wind may blow down a tree on him and crush his body, or cut off a leg or an arm; these are by the very nature of matter easily separable; but our misery doth not consist in losing these, but in the trouble and concern we have for the loss of them. If the losing them caused no pain or vexation to us, we were as happy without as with them. Now, they suppose, that the soul is united to the body on what terms God pleases, and that he could as easily have joined the sensations of pleasure with these impressions on our bodies, as that of pain, and that an infinitely good God would have done so, if a contrary power had not hindered him.

For ought I find, the whole difficulty concerning natural evils is reduced to this point, and methinks it is strange that any stress should be laid on it; which will appear, if we consider;

1st, That the argument is drawn from a matter concerning the nature of which we have no knowledge, I mean from the union of the soul and body, and from the manner in which the one affects

IV. Now, the rest of the passions are consequences of pain, uneasiness, and dread of death; *viz.* Anger, love, hatred, &c. An animal in the present state of things, must therefore either be obnoxious to these, or quickly perish. For it is impossible that the soul should have a disagreeable sensation, and not be *angry* at the cause which produces it; and so of the rest.

The rest of the passions are connected with these,

V. God

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seels and operates on the other. We can give no account how one part of matter acts on another, how these are united, or what it is that makes them stick together. Much less do we know how a soul and body are united to one another, or how it is possible that there should be a mutual action and re-action between them; and, therefore, to say that this proceeds from an arbitrary power, or that it might have been otherwise, is to affirm what nobody either doth or can know. We see the action of one part of matter on another is necessary, and arises from the nature of it: If it had been otherwise, it had not been matter but something else, and he that would not have it so, would not have God to have created any matter at all; which, as the author shews, had been to lessen God's goodness, and to hinder him from doing a thing which was better done than let alone. And how doth the objector know but it is the nature of souls, and as necessary to them to be affected thus with certain motions of matter, as for one part of matter to be moved by the impulse of another? If then our souls did not receive these impressions from the motions caused in our bodies by external force, they would not be human souls, but some other creatures; of which sort, I suppose there were as many created as the system would allow, and therefore there must either be wanting in the world this species of beings, or they must be subjected to such impressions. If, therefore, it be better for men to be as they are, than not to be at all, God has chosen the better part in giving them a being, and acted according to his infinite goodness.

But adly, If all the uneasy sensations caused in us by the incursions of external bodies tend to our preservation, and without them we could neither live or enjoy ourselves for any time; then they do more good than hurt, and consequently are a present worthy of God to bestow on us. Now this is demonstrated by the author in his book, and it is confessed that as things are now ordered, the sense of pain is necessary to oblige us to avoid many perils.

But then again it is urged, that this doth not remove the difficulty, because it is alledged by the followers of Manes, that these pains,

The passions could not be avoided otherwise than by ordering that the soul should not be affected with the motions of the body: By these means animals would be very short lived.

V. God could have avoided all this by ordering that the soul should not be affected by the motions of the body; or, at least, that every thing done therein should be agreeable: But how dangerous this would be to animals, any one may understand, who recollects how very short their lives must be, if they died with the same pleasure that they eat or drink or propagate their species. If, on tearing the body, the soul

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pains are from the evil principle, and as the good causes the taste of meat on the tongue to please, so the evil causes the fire to create pain in us when it burns us.

adly, They alledge that there was no necessity for these pains, because *Adam* was without them in Paradise. 3dly, We might have been *sufficiently obliged* to avoid what could hurt us, if we had a perfect knowledge of its approach, and had been warned to avoid the danger, not by the pain or fear which we now feel, but by withdrawing of the sense of pleasure on the approach of what might hurt or destroy us. Lastly, that these warnings are often in vain.

To give this argument its full consideration, I will examine it by parts. And first, as to what is alledged, that the pleasant sensations produced in us by external motions on the organs of our senses are from God, and the painful from the evil principle. I desire it may be considered, 1st, Whether any motion causes pain in us that doth not tend to our destruction, and whether the pains do not serve as a means to prevent it: And if the preserving our being be a greater good to us than these pains are a mischief, then it is plainly better we should have than want them. But adly, Pain seems to be nothing else but a sense that our being is impairing, and if so, it seems impossible whilst we love being and are pleased with it, that we should perceive it to decay, and not be displeased with the sense of it, and the sense of a thing displeasing to us is pain. Either, therefore, in the present case our sense must be taken away, or pain seems unavoidable. For that a certain motion caused in our organs should please us, because it contributes to support our being, and the contrary which tends to destroy us, should not displease us when we feel it, seems a contradiction. God, therefore, in making us feel the sense of pleasure by the first has likewise made us of such a nature, that we must either not feel the second at all (*i. e.* the motion that hurts us) or be uneasy at it; and let any one judge which of these two is most for the advantage of animals.

There

soul had either no sensation at all or a pleasant one, we should be no more aware of death than of sleep, nor would it be any greater injury to kill a man than to scratch him: And thus mankind would quickly fail. We must then either have been armed with these passions against death, or soon have perished: But the divine goodness chose that animals should be subject to these, rather than the earth should be entirely destitute of inhabitants.

VI. Behold now how evils spring from and multiply upon each other, while infinite goodness still urges the Deity to do the very best. This moved him to give *existence* to creatures, which cannot exist without *imperfections* and *inequality*. This excited him to create *matter*, and to put it in *motion*, which is necessarily attended with separation and dissolution, generation and corruption. This persuaded him to couple souls

It is not contrary to the divine goodness to permit these inconveniences since they could not be avoided without greater.

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There needs not, therefore, any ill principle to introduce a sense of pain at the presence of what tends to destroy us, for giving us the sense of pleasure at the presence of what supports us of necessity infers the other.

And it is remarkable, as our author observes, that when the pain exceeds the pleasure of being, the sense of both generally ceases; that is, when our being ceases to be a benefit, God takes it from us.

As to the 2d objection, that these pains on the presence of destructive motions attacking us are unnecessary, because *Adam* in Paradise was without them; I have already answered this, by shewing that it doth not appear that he was altogether without pain or passion; and that he was only secured from such pains as might cause his death, and that for a time, till removed to a better place.*

As to the 3d objection, that if we had a perfect knowledge of the approach of every thing that could hurt us, and had only felt a withdrawing of pleasure when any such thing was nigh, we might, by this means, have been obliged to avoid it as effectually as by the sense of pain. I answer.

1st, The

* See note H, and the sermon annexed,

souls with bodies, and to give them mutual affections, whence proceeded pain and sorrow, hatred and fear, with the rest of the passions; yet all of them, as we have seen, are necessary.

God therefore compared the good in things with the evils which necessarily attend them; and tolerated those evils which were inseparable from the good.

VII. For, as *created existence* necessarily includes the evil of imperfection, so every species of it is subject to its own peculiar imperfections; that is, to evils. All the species of creatures then must either have been omitted, or their concomitant evils tolerated: the divine goodness therefore put the evils in one scale and the good in the other; and since the good preponderated, an infinitely good God would not omit that, because of the concomitant evils; for that very omission would have been attended with more and greater evils, and so would have been less agreeable to infinite goodness.

VIII. The

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1st, The withdrawing of pleasure or diminishing it, is a greater evil to us than the pains we feel on such occasions; which plainly appears from this, that we rather choose to endure these pains than lose the pleasure our senses afford us; which is manifest in so many instances, that I hardly need mention them. The gout is one of the most tormenting diseases that attend us; and yet who would not rather endure it, than lose the pleasure of feeling? Most men are sensible that eating certain meats, and indulging ourselves in the use of several drinks, will bring it; and yet we see this doth not deter us from them, and we think it more tolerable to endure the gout, than lose the pleasure that plentiful eating and drinking affords. What pains will not a man endure rather than lose a limb, or the advantage that a plentiful fortune yields? This expedient, therefore, is very improper: it would be an exchange for the worse; deprive us of a greater good, to prevent a lesser evil.

But, adly, Either this diminution of the pleasure would be a more sensible loss to us than pain is now, or otherwise. If it were more uneasy to us than pain, the exchange, as before, would be for the worse. If it were not, it would not be sufficient; for we plainly see that in many cases the greatest pains and clearest prospect of them are not sufficient to divert us from what may be hurtful

VIII. The least evil, you will say, ought not to be admitted for the sake of the greatest good. (For to affirm that God does evil that good may come of it, is blasphemy.) Neither does the distinction

The axiom about not doing evil for the sake of good, does not take place where the least evil is chosen.

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ful, when it comes in competition with a pleasure. We have therefore no reason to complain of God, who has given us warning by pain of what might destroy us, since a less effectual means could not have secured us. In short, this is God's way, and for us to think we could have found a better, is pride and impudence; and there needs no more to give a sensible proof of it, than to consider the folly of the expedient proposed by the objector.

But then it is urged that here is a farther degree of our misery, and an argument that an ill principle had a hand in framing us, that we cannot avoid one evil but by the fear of a worse, and that we do not endure the pains and fears that accompany life but on account of the greater fear we have of death; and the imprinting in us so great a love of life which has so little good in it, and in truth much less than it has evil, must be the work of a malignant and mischievous author. But I answer, I have shewed* that it is the good we feel in life that makes us love it and afraid to lose it, and we only apprehend the loss of life, and flee it, because we fear the losing so good a thing. The love of life is no otherwise imprinted in us than by the sense we have of its goodness, and then the quarrel against God is, that he has given us so good a thing that we are unwilling to part with it, and chuse to endure such pains as tend to preserve it, and without which we could not long enjoy it. It is a most wicked thought to imagine that God is like a tyrant that delights to torture and torment his creatures. The contrary is plain by his subjecting them to pain in no cases but where that sense is necessary to preserve a good to them that counterbalances it.

But then, in the 4th place, the objector urges, that these pains are in many cases fruitless, and no way tend to help us. It is acknowledged that the gout and gravel, and many acute pains, are of no use, nor do they any ways contribute to prolong our lives. I reply, the gout, gravel, &c. are distempers of the body, in which the humours or solid parts are out of order: The question then is, whether it would be better for us to be insensible of this disorder, or to feel it. Let us suppose then a man in a fever (*i. e.* that his blood and humours should be in such a ferment as is observable in that distemper) and that he should feel no pain or uneasiness by it; the consequence would be that he would die before he were aware. He would not avoid those things that increase it, or take those remedies that allay it: he would not know how near he were to death, or when he was to avoid the air or motion, either of which would destroy him. There are diseases that take away our senses and become mortal, without giving us warning: none are

O

more

* See note Z.

distinction between *moral* and *natural* evil help any thing toward the solution of this difficulty: for what we call *moral* evil, as shall be shown below, is that which is forbidden; now nothing

18

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more terrible than these, and most would chuse to die of the most painful distemper rather than be thus surprised; we may judge then how it would be with us if all distempers were of the like nature. I doubt whether we could survive one fit of the gout, gravel, or fever, if the pain we feel in them did not warn us and oblige us to give ourselves that quiet, ease, and abstinence that are necessary to our recovery. Thus foolishly they reason that go about to mend the work of God.

But, 2dly, we find that providence has joined a certain train of thoughts and sensations with certain motions in our body, and it is as impossible that all motions should beget the same thoughts in us, as that the same letters should express all words, or the same words all thoughts. If therefore only some motions in our body occasion pleasing thoughts and sensations, then the absence of these motions must likewise deprive us of the pleasure annexed to them, which is so great an evil that we are ready to prevent it with a great deal of pain. And the contrary motions must by the same rule occasion contrary, that is, unpleasant sensations.

If therefore, a fever or a fit of the gout deprive us of these grateful motions in the body that give pleasure, and be contrary to them, it is a clear case, that uneasy sensations on such an occasion cannot be avoided, except man were something else than he is, that is, no man. Either therefore God must not have made man in his present circumstances, nor given him a body that is apt to be put out of order by the impulse of those neighbouring bodies that surround him, or else he must suffer him to be sometimes disturbed by them, and let that disturbance be accompanied with pain.

If it should be alledged that God might have put man into such circumstances that no impulse of other bodies should have caused such motions in his own as procure pain. I answer, this might have done if the very motion of his joints and muscles, and the recruiting of the liquids of his body did not continually wear and destroy the organs, and alter and corrupt the blood and other juices; and lastly, if there were no bodies in his vicinity that could hurt or alter these: But as the frame of the world now is with solid and heterogeneous bodies in it, and which the good of the whole required there should be, and whilst these are all in motion, and there is a continual change of the vicinity of these bodies to the bodies of men: whilst there is variety of bodies on the earth, and these necessarily send out different and contrary effluvia, that mix with the juices of our bodies: lastly, whilst not only new bodies move toward us, but we move from place to place, without which

power

is forbidden by God but generally, at least, on account of the *inconveniences* attending the forbidden actions: these *inconveniences* are *natural evils*; therefore *moral evils* are prohibited on account of the *natural* ones, and for that reason, only are evils, because they lead to *natural evils*. But that which makes any thing to be such, is itself much *more such*: therefore the *natural*, you will say, are greater evils than the *moral*, and cannot with less blasphemy be attributed to God.

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power we should be very imperfect, and incapable of the greatest part of the happiness we now enjoy; it is inconceivable that we should not meet with things that by the laws of matter necessarily disturb and disorder our bodies; and therefore, either the earth must be void of inhabitants, or they must be content to submit to and suffer these disturbances; and I have already shewed that these must necessarily occasion uneasy sensations in us, which I take to be the definition of pain.

To sum up this head. For ought I can see, the fundamental objection concerning natural evils, is that God has given us mortal bodies, for which I think the book fully accounts; and if it once be confessed that it is not contrary to the goodness of God to make some mortal animals, I do not see how we can imagine such animals should apprehend the approach of death and not fear it; or feel the decay of their bodies and not be uneasy at it; especially when that fear serves to preserve them, and the sense of that uneasiness puts them on proper methods to support themselves. I do not deny but the infinite wisdom of God might have found other means, but I deny that there could be any better; and he that undertakes to prove that there might be better, must understand all the circumstances of these animals as they are now, and all the consequences that must happen in an infinite series of times, in pursuance of the method he proposes; but it is impossible any one should know these things; and therefore, as the author concludes, no man has any right to make use of such an objection.

[For a particular account of all the *passions* and their final causes, and the necessity of each, see *Hutcheson's* essay on the *Nature and Conduct* of them, § 2. p. 48, 50, &c. and § 6. p. 179. or *Watts* on the *Use and Abuse* of them, § 13. or *Chambers's* Cyclopædia under the word *Passion*, or *Scott's* Christian Life, p. 2. C. 1. § 2. par. 23. or the *Spektator*, N^o. 255, 408. or Dr. *J. Clarke* on Natural Evil, p. 256, &c. or *Morè's* Enchiridion Ethicum, B. 1. C. 8, 9, 10, 11.]

Granting all this to be true, yet though evil is not to be *done* for the sake of good, yet the *less* evil is to be chosen before the *greater*: and since evils necessarily surround you whether you act or not, you ought to prefer that side which is attended with the least. Since God was therefore compelled by the necessary imperfections of created beings, either to abstain from creating them at all, or to bear with the evils consequent upon them: and since it is a less evil to permit those, than to omit these; it is plain that God did not allow of natural evils for the sake of any good; but chose the least out of several evils, *i. e.* would rather have creatures liable to *natural evils*, than no creatures at all. The same will be shewn hereafter concerning moral evils.

S E C T. V.

Of Hunger, Thirst, and Labour.

The parts
of the body
fly off: it
stands in
need there-
fore of re-
paration,
viz. by
food.

A Terrestrial animal must, as we have said necessarily consist of mixed and heterogeneous parts; its fluids are also in a perpetual flux and ferment. Now it's plain that this cannot be without the expence of those fluids, and attrition of the solids; and hence follows *death* and *dissolution*, except those be repaired: a new accession of matter is therefore necessary to supply what flies off and is worn away, and much more so for the growth of animals.

Choice
must be
had in

II. But animals have particular *constitutions*, and cannot be nourished by any sort of matter: some

some *choice* therefore must be made of it, to which food, since they are to be urged by an importunity strong all things are not enough to excite their endeavours after it. Hence equally pro- *bunger* and *thirst* come to affect the soul; affec- per. tions that are sometimes indeed troublesome, but yet necessary, and which bring more pleasure than pain along with them.

III. But why, say you, are we obliged to *la-* The mat- *bour* in quest of food? why are not the elements rials of themselves sufficient? I answer, they are suffi- food are cient for some animals: but mankind required soon cor- such a disposition of matter as was to be prepared rupted: by various coctions and changes, and that daily, they can because it is soon liable to corruption, and if not there- kept long would be unfit for nourishment. fore be Hence labour becomes necessary to provide procured victuals in this present state of things: neither without la- could hunger, or thirst, or labour*, (which are bour: reckoned among *natural* evils) be prevented without greater inconveniences. The divine Every ani- goodness therefore had the highest reason for af- mal is plac- fixing these to animals. ed by God

IV. Now as animals require different sorts of where it food, as was shewn, according to their different may have constitutions, so God has placed every one of its proper them where it may find what is proper for it: nourish- on which account there is scarce any thing in the ment; elements but what may be food for some. Every hence al- herb has its insect which it supports. The earth, most every the water, the very stones, serve for aliment to herb main- living creatures †. tains its

V. But some stand in need of more delicate Some ani- food: now God could have created an *inanimate* mals are machine, which might have supplied them with produced such food; but one that is animated does it much for food better and with more ease. A being that has to others, existed on and would any other not have life terms.

* See note 33.

† See notes 24, and 26.

life is (*cæteris paribus*) preferable to one that has not: God therefore animated that machine which furnishes out provision for the more perfect animals; which was both graciously and providentially done: for by this means he gained so much life to the world as there is in those animals which are food for others: by this means they themselves enjoy some kind of life, and are of service also to the rest. An ox, for instance, or a calf, is bred, nourished and protected for some time in order to become fit food for man. This certainly is better and more eligible, than if the matter of its body had been converted into an inanimate mass, such as a Pompion, or continued in the state of unformed clay. Nor is it hardly dealt withal, by being made for the food of a more noble animal, since it was on this condition only that it had life given, which it could not otherwise have enjoyed. Matter which is fit for the nourishment of man, is also capable of life; if therefore God had denied it life, he had omitted a degree of good which might have been produced without any impediment to his principal design, which does not seem very agreeable to infinite goodness. Is it better therefore that it should be endowed with life for a time, though it is to be devoured afterwards, than to continue totally stupid and unactive. The common objection then is of no force, *viz.* That inanimate matter might have been prepared for this use; for it is better that it should be animated; especially as such animals are ignorant of futurity, and are neither conscious nor solicitous about their being made for this purpose. So that so long as they live, they enjoy themselves without anxiety; at least they rejoice in the present good, and are neither tormented with the remembrance
of

of what is past, nor the fear that is to come; and lastly, are killed with less pain than they would be by a distemper or old age. Let us not be surpris'd then at the universal war as it were among animals, or that the stronger devour the weaker; for these are made on purpose to afford aliment to the others. (30.)

VI. As

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(30.) What is here laid down will upon examination be found to be perfectly consistent with our observation in note 23.

As the point before us is set in a very good light by Dr. J. Clarke, || I shall not scruple to transcribe the whole paragraph. If we consider the effect of animal creatures being thus made food for each other; we shall find that by this means there is the more good upon the whole: for under the present circumstances of the creation, animals living in this manner one upon another, could not have been prevented, but a much greater evil would have followed. For then there could not have been so great a number, nor so great a variety of animals as there are at present, some of which are so very minute, and the quantity of them such, that mixing themselves with herbs and plants, and grain on which themselves feed, and with the water and liquids which they drink, they must necessarily be devoured by larger animals who live upon the same food, without so much as being seen or any way perceived by them. It is therefore much better upon the whole, that they should live upon one another in the manner they now do, than that they should not live at all. For if such animal life is to be esteemed superior to not existing at all, or to a vegetable life; and the more there is of such animal life, the more of good there is in the world; it is evident that by this means there is room for more whole species of creatures, at least for many more individuals of each species, than there would otherwise be; and that the variety of the creation is hereby much enlarged, and the goodness of its author displayed. For the constitution of animal bodies is such as requires that they should be maintained by food: now if this food can be made capable of animal life also, it is a very great improvement of it. A certain quantity of food is necessary for the preservation of a determinate number of animals: which food, were it mere vegetable, would perhaps serve for that purpose only: but by being so formed as to become animal, though it be in a lower degree, and the enjoyment of life in such creatures less, yet it is more perfect than unformed clay, or even than the most curious plant.

|| Discourse concerning natural evil, p. 289.

All parts
of the
earth could
not have
afforded
nourish-
ment and
reception
for men,
whatever
situation
they had
been pla-
ced in.

VI. As for the *difficulty* of procuring food, and the *want* of it in some places, it is to be observ-
ed that the state of the earth depends upon the
light and heat of the sun; and though we do
not perfectly understand the structure of it, yet
we have reason to conjecture that it is carried
about its axis by a *diurnal*, and about the sun by
an *annual* motion: that its figure is a spheroid
described by the the revolution of a semi-ellipse
about a conjugate axis; and that this proceeds
from the laws of motion and gravitation. Now
in such a situation, some parts of it must neces-
sarily be unfit for such inhabitants as men, since
the parallelism of its axis is preserved in the an-
nual motion, and the revolution about the same
axis in the diurnal. If these should undergo the
very least alteration, the whole fabric of the earth
would be disordered; the ocean and dry land
would change places to the detriment of the ani-
mals. Since therefore neither the annual nor
diurnal motion of the earth could be altered with-
out harm; it is plain that some parts of the
earth must necessarily be less convenient for the
habitation of mankind, namely those about the
poles; and that others must require much la-
bour to make them convenient, as we find by
experience in our own climate; but it will evi-
dently appear to any considering person, that in
what

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‘ plant. Thus the animal part of the creation has its several de-
‘ grees of life, and as much variety in it as is to be found in the
‘ inanimate and vegetable part; so that in this respect there is so
‘ far from being any just ground of complaint, that the wisdom
‘ and contrivance of the animal world is admirable, and plainly
‘ shews the excellency of the whole, and subserviency of all the
‘ particulars in order to obtain the greatest good that they are ca-
‘ pable of.’

See also the beginning of the *Spectator*, N°. 519.

what situation or motion soever you suppose the earth to be, either these or worse evils must be admitted; it is in vain therefore to complain of these inconveniencies, which cannot be avoided without greater. (31.)

VII. Neither

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(31.) Thus if the *figure* of the earth were changed into a perfect *sphere*, the equatorial parts must all lie under water. If it were of a *cubic*, *prismatic*, or any other *angular* figure, it would neither be so *capacious* for habitation, nor so fit for *motion*, nor so commodious for the reception of *light* and *heat*, for the circulation of the *winds*, and the *distribution* of the *waters*; as is obvious to any one that is acquainted with the first elements of natural philosophy, and is at large demonstrated by *Cheyne*, *Derham*, *Ray*, &c. If its situation were removed, its constitution must be altered too, or else, if placed considerably farther from the sun, it would be frozen into ice, if nearer, it would be burnt to a coal. If either its annual or diurnal motion were *stopped*, *retarded*, or *accelerated*, the useful and agreeable vicissitudes of *summer* and *winter*, *day* and *night*, would cease, or at least cease to be so useful and agreeable as they now are. The immoderate length or shortness of the seasons would prove pernicious to the earth, and the stated times of business and repose would be as inconvenient to its inhabitants; as disproportionate to the common affairs of life, and the various exigences of mankind ||. If, in the last place, we alter the *inclination* of the *earth's* axis, the like inconveniencies will attend the *polar* parts: if we destroy the *parallelism* of it, besides destroying at the same time the useful arts of navigation and dialling, we bring upon us much worse consequences. A description of some few of them from *Bentley's* sermon above cited may perhaps not be disagreeable, ' We all know, from the very elements of astronomy, that this inclined position of the axis, which keeps always the same direction, and a constant parallelism to itself, is the sole cause of these grateful and needful vicissitudes of the four seasons of the year and the variation in length of days. If we take away the *inclination*, it would absolutely undo the Northern nations, the sun would never come nearer us than he doth now on the 10th of *March*, or the 12th of *September*. But would we rather part with the *parallelism*? Let us suppose then that the axis of the earth keeps always the same inclination towards the body of the sun: This, indeed, would cause a variety of days and nights, and seasons, on the earth; but then every particular country would have always the same diversity of day and night, and the same constitution of season, without any alteration. Some would always have long nights and short days, others again perpetually long days and short nights: One climate would be scorched and sweltered with everlasting *dog-days*, while an eternal *December* blasted another. This surely

|| See *Bentley's* last sermon, p. 315. 5th edit.

Of Earth-
quakes,
Lightning
and De-
luges.

VII. Neither are *earth-quakes, storms, thunder, deluges, and inundations* any stronger arguments against the wisdom and goodness of God. These are sometimes sent by a just and gracious God for the punishment of mankind; but often depend on other natural causes, which are necessary, and could not be removed without greater damage to the whole. These concussions of the elements are indeed prejudicial, but more prejudice would arise to the universal system by the absence of them. What the genuine and immediate causes of them are I dare not determine: they seem in general to derive their origin from the unequal heat of the sun, from the fluidity, mutability, and contrariety of things. To these we may add the asperity and inequality of the earth's surface; without which nevertheless the whole earth, or the greatest part of it, would be uninhabitable. For instance, we complain of the mountains as rubbish, as not only disfiguring the face of the earth, but also as useless and inconvenient; and yet without these, neither rivers nor fountains, nor the weather for producing and ripening fruits could regularly be preserved*.

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* is not quite so good as the present order of seasons. But shall the axis rather observe no constant inclination to any thing, but vary and waver at uncertain times and places? This would be a happy constitution indeed! There would be no health, no life, nor subsistence in such an irregular system: By those surprising needs of the pole, we might be tossed backward or forward, in a moment, from *January* to *June*, nay, possibly from the *January* of *Greenland*, to the *June* of *Abissinia*. It is better, therefore, upon all accounts that the axis should be continued in its present posture and direction; so that this also is a signal character of the divine wisdom and goodness.

See also *Cheyne's Phil. Princ.* C. 3. § 24, 25, 26; &c.

* See note 33.

In mountainous countries we blame Providence for the uncertainty of the weather, for the frequency of the showers and storms, which yet proceed from the very nature of the climate, and without which all the moisture would glide down the declivity, and the fruits wither away. The earth then must either not be created at all, or these things be permitted. (32.)

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(32.) The several objections mentioned in this paragraph, are solidly refuted by Dr. J. Clarke in his treatise on *Natural Evil*, part of which I shall take the liberty to insert as usual, and refer the reader to the book itself for the rest.

Having described the nature and use of the air's *elasticity*, and the *acid nitrous* and *sulphureous* particles with which it is impregnated, which are the cause of *fermentation*, he proceeds to account for earthquakes, &c. p. 190. ' Thus the internal parts of the earth being the only proper place for containing so large a store of sulphur and nitre and minerals, as is required for so many thousand years as the earth in its present state has, and may yet continue; it must necessarily be, that when the *fermentation* is made in such subterraneous caverns as are not wide enough for the particles to expand themselves in, or have no open passage to run out at, they will, by the fore-mentioned law, shake the earth to a considerable distance, tear those caverns to pieces; and according to the depth of such caverns, or quantity of materials, contained in them, remove large pieces of the surface of the earth, from one place to another, in the same manner, though to a much higher degree than artificial explosions made under ground; the effect of which is sensible to a great distance. If it happens that those fermentations are in places under the sea, the water mixing with these materials increases their force, and is thereby thrown back with great violence, so as to seem to rise up into the clouds, and fall down again sometimes in very large drops, and sometimes in whole *spouts*, which are sufficient to drown all that is near them. If the *fermentation* be not so violent, but such only as raises large vapours or steams, which can find their way through small occult passages of the earth, those near its surface, by their continual expirations, are, at first, the cause of gentle winds; and those afterwards by their continual increase, become, perhaps, storms and whirlwinds, and tempests which many times destroy the fruits, tear up the trees, and overthrow the houses: But if they be still more gentle, there being always some sulphureous exhalations, especially if the earth be dry, they then ascend along with the lighter vapours, into the upper regions of the air

where,

The number of animals to be proportioned to the food and not the food to the animals.

VIII. The same must be said of the *lakes* and *ocean*. For it is manifest, that fruits, vegetables, &c. which are the food of animals, depend upon moisture, and that this is exhaled from the sea, and watry places, by the sun; and since the showers and dews thus elevated, are not more copious than suffice for the vegetation of plants, it is plain that the seas and lakes do not exceed what is necessary, and could not be diminished without detriment to the whole. Vain, therefore, is the complaint of *Lucretius*, who arraigns all these as *faulty*. Neither was the earth too narrow

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where, when a large quantity of them is gathered together, they ferment with the acid nitre, and taking fire cause thunder and lightning, and other meteors. This, as far as can be gathered from experience and observation of the works of nature, is the origin and cause of those imperfections and evils, which the present constitution of the air, and the laws of motion observed by those particles mixed with it, unavoidably subject it to. They are the natural and genuine effects of the regulation it is under, and without altering the primary laws of it (that is making it something else than what it is, or changing it into another form: the result of which would be only to render it liable to evils of another kind, against which the same objections would equally lie) or in a supernatural manner hindering it from producing such effects, it is impossible to prevent them. And if we add to this, that these evils are the fewest that in the nature of things could be, without hindering a much greater good: That they are in the most convenient parts, and the most guarded against doing mischief that could be; and that there are also good uses to be made of them: we shall have no reason to complain of or find fault with them. Were the quantity of sulphur and nitre much diminished, there would not be sufficient to fill the region of air for the purposes of vegetation and life; but the ground would grow barren, and the animals would waste and die: and if there were a much greater quantity, the contrary effect would happen, the earth would be too fat, the plants would grow too gross, and the animals would be suffocated and choaked. The temperature is therefore as exact as it could be, all circumstances considered; and the small inconveniences are nothing compared with the general good. See also the word *Earth-quake* in *Chambers's Cyclopaedia*.

narrow nor needed it too much labour to sustain its animals: For it was sufficient for those animals which God had given it.† But when they multiply above the proportion of their food, it is impossible that it should be sufficient; it would not be enough if it were all converted into food. For a certain proportion is to be observed between the provision and the eaters, which if the number of animals exceed, they must, at length, necessarily perish with hunger. Want of provision then ought not to be made an objection: for if the number of creatures to be provided for be enlarged above this proportion, the greatest plenty would not suffice; if this proportion betwixt the food and animals be kept up, the least would be sufficient. It is our own fault therefore, not God's, if provisions fail; for the number of men may be confined within the bounds prescribed by nature, as might easily be shewn, if it were worth our while.

The hundredth part of mankind which might live upon the earth, does not yet inhabit it: vain, therefore, is the complaint about seas and deserts.

IX. But there is no need of artifice on this occasion; for by our fault things are come to this pass, that even the hundredth part of those eatables which might be had, do not meet with any to consume them. The divine beneficence has therefore dealt bountifully with mankind in respect of provisions.

X. It is to be observed in the last place, that animals are of such a nature as to delight in action, or the exercise of their faculties, nor can we have any other notion of happiness even in God himself.* Since then the faculties of both body and mind are to be exercised in order to produce

It is absurd for any one to desire a different place or station from that which is allotted him; since he was made to

† See *Derham's Phys. Theol.* B. 4. c. 17.

* See ch. 1. § 3. par. 9. and ch. 5. § 1. sub. 4.

all that
place, and
would
otherwise
have had
none at all.

produce pleasure, where is the wonder if God destined that exercise in part for procuring of food, and connected this pleasure with it. (33.)
The

NOTES.

(33.) Besides the necessity there is for labour, in order to restrain man in his present state from an excess of folly and wickedness, (which our author considers in the two last paragraphs of this chapter) the use and advantage of it appears also from the manifest tendency it has to preserve and improve the faculties of both body and mind. If used in a moderate degree, it preserves our health, vigour, and activity; gives us a quick sense and relish of pleasure, and prevents a great many miseries which attend idleness. This is well described by the *Guardian*, N^o. 131. and the *Spectator*, N^o. 125. 'I consider the body as a system of tubes and glands, or, to use a more rustic phrase, a bundle of pipes and strainers, fitted to one another after so wonderful a manner, as to make a proper engine for the soul to work with. This description does not only comprehend the bowels, bones, tendons, veins, nerves, and arteries, but every muscle, and every ligature, which is a composition of fibres, that are so many imperceptible tubes or pipes interwoven on all sides with invisible glands or strainers. This general idea of a human body, without considering it in the niceties of anatomy, lets us see how absolutely necessary labour is for the right preservation of it. There must be frequent motions and agitations, to mix, digest, and separate the juices contained in it, as well as to clear and cleanse the infinitude of pipes and strainers of which it is composed; and to give their solid parts a more firm and lasting tone. Labour or exercise ferments the humours, casts them into their proper channels, throws off redundancies, and helps nature in those secret distributions, without which the body cannot subsist in its vigour, nor the soul act with cheerfulness. I might here mention the effects which this has upon all the faculties of the mind, by keeping the understanding clear, the imagination untroubled, and refining those spirits that are necessary for the proper exertion of our intellectual faculties, during the present laws of union between soul and body. It is to a neglect in this particular that we must ascribe the spleen which is so frequent in men of studious and sedentary tempers, as well as the vapours to which those of the other sex are so often subject.'

He proceeds to illustrate both the wisdom and goodness of God, from his having fitted and obliged us to this labour and exercise, which is so necessary to our well-being: which observation will help us to account for the second and third evil arising from the fall mentioned in § 9. par. 5. The fitness of a state of labour for fallen man is shewn at large by *Sherlock on Judgment*, c. 1. § 8. p. 179. and *D Oly* in his *first Dissertation*, c. 9. p. 98, &c. 2d edit.

The infinite power of God was able to produce animals of such capacities; and since the creation of them was no inconvenience to other beings who might exercise themselves in a more noble manner, may not the infinite goodness of God be conceived to have almost compelled him not to refuse or envy those the benefit of life? Some of this kind were to be created, since there was room left for them in the work of God, after so many others were made as was convenient. But you may wish that some other place and condition had fallen to your lot. Perhaps so. But if you had taken up another's place, that other, or some else, must have been put into yours, who being alike ungrateful to the Divine Providence, would wish for the place which you have now occupied. Know then that it was necessary that you should either be what you are, or not at all. For since every other place and state which the system or nature of things allowed was occupied by some others, you must of necessity either fill that which you are now in, or be banished out of nature. For do you expect that any other should be turned out of his order, and you placed in his room? that is, that God should exhibit a peculiar and extraordinary munificence toward you to the prejudice of others. You ought therefore not to censure, but adore the divine goodness for making you what you are. You could neither have been made otherwise, nor in a better manner; but to the disadvantage of some others, or of the whole.

S E C T. VI.

Concerning Propagation of the Species, Childhood,
and Old Age.

Animals
may be re-
paired
three
ways; 1st,
If death
were pre-
vented by
omni-
potence;
2^{dly}, by
creation;
3^{dly}, by
propaga-
tion.

FROM what has been said, it appears, that animals which have solid bodies, are naturally mortal; though the earth, therefore, were at first fully stocked with them, yet their number being continually diminished by death, it would, at length, be quite destitute of inhabitants. There might, it seems, have been a threefold remedy for this evil: First, If God, by his omnipotence, should prevent the natural effects of the mutual percussing of bodies, viz. The corruption and dissolution of themselves, and the change or effusion of their fluids. For from these the destruction of animals necessarily arises, as these do from the composition of bodies, and their acting on each other. Secondly, By leaving nature to itself, and letting it act by universal mechanic laws; and when these brought on a dissolution of animal bodies, that others be substituted in their room by creation. Thirdly, By ordering that an animal should generate its like, and provide another to supply its place when it declined.

The third
method is
the best,
because it
can be ef-
fected
without
doing vic-
lence to
the laws
of nature.

II. Who does not see that this last is the best method of preserving a constant number of inhabitants upon the earth? For it is the same thing, *ceteris paribus*, with regard to the system, whether the earth have these inhabitants which it has at present, or others equal in number and perfection: but it is not the same thing whe-
ther

ther the laws of nature be observed or violated*. In the former methods, God must have interfered every moment by his absolute power: he must have done infinite violence to the laws of nature, and confounded all the constitutions and orders of things, and that without any benefit; nay, with extraordinary detriment to the whole. For since the universal laws of motion are the best that could possibly be established, they would seldom be reversed without damage to the whole. Neither does it become the wisdom of God to have left his work so imperfect as to want continual mending, even in the smallest particulars. It was better, therefore, for it to be made in such a manner as we see it is, viz. that a new offspring should be propagated out of the animals themselves, and by themselves.

III. And herein we may admire the divine wisdom and goodness, which hath so prudently and effectually contrived this end. For it has implanted in all creatures (as we see) a strong and almost irresistible appetite of propagating their kind, and has rendered this act of propagation so useful and agreeable to them who perform it, that posterity becomes dearer to many than life itself; and if it were left to their choice, they would rather die than lose their offspring and the rewards of love: nay, there is scarce any one that is not ready to protect its young at the hazard of its life. God has, therefore, by one single law and a sort of mechanism, replenished the earth with living creatures, and provided that a sufficient number should never be wanting, without the intervention of a power, which would be irregular and an imputation

The divine goodness and wisdom admirable in the contrivance of it.

P

on

* See note 25.

on the skill and wisdom of the architect. Who would not prefer such a piece of mechanism, where one machine generates another, and continually produces a new one in its turn, without any new and extraordinary intervention of the artificer, before one which would immediately and every day require his assistance and amendment?

Why men are tormented with the continual dread of death while brutes are not at all concerned about it.

IV. This method, you will say, is fit enough for the brutes, many of which must necessarily die not only by the law of their nature, but also for the sake of others, for whose use they were created to serve as food. Neither is death the greatest of evils to them, since they live without being sensible of their mortality. But man, is hardly dealt withal, who from his very infancy is troubled with fear and dread more bitter even than death; and who frequently foretastes, and by ruminating thoroughly digests, whatever bitterness there is in death itself. Neither does the hope or care of offspring, nor the enjoyment of these pleasures, compensate for so many miseries and evils: The divine goodness might therefore have either concealed from man his mortality, or else removed that innate terror arising in our minds from the prospect of death, which is always dreadful. (34.)

V. It

N O T E S.

(34.) A sufficient answer to this objection may be found in the last chapter of Dr. *Sherlock's* admirable treatise on *Death*. I shall insert a little of it. ' There are great and wise reasons why God should imprint this aversion to death on human nature; because it obliges us to take care of ourselves, and to avoid every thing which will destroy or shorten our lives: this in many cases is a great principle of virtue, as it preserves us from fatal and destructive vices; it is a great instrument of government, and makes men afraid of committing such villainies as the laws of their country

V. It is to be confessed indeed, that these are indications that man has some relation to immortality, and that the state in which he is placed at present is not entirely natural to him, otherwise he would not be uneasy in it, nor aspire so eagerly after another. The present life of man is therefore either assigned him for a time, by way of punishment, as some think, or by way of *prelude* to, or *preparation* for a better, as our religion teaches, and our very nature persuades us to hope and expect. This is presumed, you will say, and not proved. Be it so. But if by the supposition of a future state this difficulty may be solved, and providence vindicated, when it is arraigned as dealing hardly with mankind, who is so foolish as to be willing to call in question the power and goodness of God, rather than admit of so probable an hypothesis? to which we may add, and believed by almost all mankind. But if it were not so, God has bestowed other benefits of life upon us, which in our own judgments are not all inferior to the preservation of life, and this appears from hence, that we often prefer these benefits to life itself, which we should never do, if we did not sometimes esteem

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* country have made capital : and therefore since the natural fear of death is of such great advantage to us, we must be contented with it, though it makes the thoughts of dying a little uneasy ; especially if we consider, that when this natural fear of death is not encreased by other causes, it may be conquered or allayed by reason and wise consideration." p. 329. 4th edit.

For a farther account of both the rational and irrational fear of death, what it is, and what it ought to be : the ends and effects, and also the remedies of it, See *Norris's Discourse on Heb. 2. 15.*

* *Practical Discourses*, Vol. 4th.

esteem them dearer to us. To come to a conclusion: without an universal confusion of nature, without violence offered to the laws and order of it, the same animals could not prolong their life for any considerable time; it remained therefore that some supply the place of others successively, and that the *species* be perpetuated, since the *individuals* could not, lest the whole animal kind should prove a thing of but one age's duration.

It is expedient for men to be born helpless; hence the foundation of social life, &c.

VI. From hence it appears that the race of mortals is to be perpetuated by the propagation of their species; and since every animal is in a perpetual flux, and may either increase or decay, it was proper to proceed from less beginnings to greater; by this means the new offspring would be less burthensome to the parents, and the *young* and *old* agree better together. I confess indeed men are born defenceless and unable to protect themselves, and less qualified to provide for themselves than any other animals: but God has assigned us parents, guardians, and faithful guides, so that we are never more happy than when under their protection. Hence *childhood*, blessed with the simple enjoyment of good things, and void of care, becomes more pleasant to us than any other age. Hence also comes reverence and relief to the aged; hence proceeds comfort to the *mature*, and support to the *decrepit*. Nay the seeds and principles of social life are all laid in this appetite of generation. To this propension we owe almost all the benefits of society. Nothing therefore could be more desirable to creatures mortal (as we are by the necessary condition of terrestrial matter) and obnoxious to miseries, than to be born after such a manner as in the first part of life, while we are tender, unacquainted

acquainted with things, and put under the guardianship of others, to enjoy the sweets without the care; in the *middle*, to please ourselves as much in taking care of others; and in the *decrepit*, feeble age to be assisted in our turn by others whom we have educated. This part of the divine œconomy is so far therefore from needing an apology, that it is rather a *demonstration* of his goodness. The race of men was to be repaired, since death could not be prevented without a greater evil; and that reparation is ordered in so wise and beneficent a way, that nothing can be more worthy of the divine power and goodness, nothing deserve greater admiration.

VII. Now these two appetites, *viz.* of *self-preservation*, and the *propagation* of our species, The chief appetites are those of self-preservation, and propagation of the species. are the primary, the original of all others. From these spring pleasure and an agreeable enjoyment of things; from these comes almost every thing that is advantageous or desirable in life. But all these are mingled with some evils, which could not be avoided without greater,

S E C T. VII.

Of Diseases, Wild-Beasts, and Venomous Creatures.

WE must observe (as before*) that our bodies consist of solid and fluid parts, and that these solid members may be either cut or broken to pieces, disjointed, or otherwise rendered Bodies are liable to dissolution, and humours

* Sect. 3.

to corrup- tion ;
hence
pains and
diseases.

dered unfit for motion : whence *weakness, languishing and torments* : that the fluids also are liable, not only to consumption, but corruption too ; to ebullition by too intense heat, or stagnation by cold : whence proceed various maladies and diseases.

The strength of poisons, &c. arises from the contrariety of things, which could not be removed without taking away motion.

II. Now there are certain juices in the earth which we inhabit, from a mixture of which arise changes and coagulations. There are other bodies also which fly asunder with greater violence when mixed. Thus milk, by the infusion of a little acid, turns to cheese and whey : Thus spirits of wine and gun-powder, when touched by the fire, run into flame ; and there is nothing to hinder the same from coming to pass in the blood and humours of a human body. Now those things, which being mixed with them suddenly dissolve ; coagulate, or render them unfit for circulation, we call poisonous. And if we consider those contraries by which we are nourished, and in the struggle or opposition of which nature consists, it is scarce conceivable but that these things should often happen. Nor can all contrariety be taken away, except motion be taken away too, as we have shewn ; nor could all these things that are contrary to our constitution be removed, except some species of creatures were extinct, or never created ; that is, our security must have been purchased at too dear a rate. For if every thing that is in any respect repugnant to us were removed, it would cost either the whole system, or ourselves more evil than we receive from thence at present, as will sufficiently appear to any one that enumerates the particulars.

Of epide-
mical di-
seases.

III. It is to be observed that the parts of this mundane system which are contiguous to us, viz. the

the air, waters, and the earth itself, are liable to changes: nor could it possibly be otherwise, if the whole machine, of which these are but small parts, be thoroughly considered: nor could these changes, especially the sudden ones, always agree with the temperature of the humours of a human body. For they enter into the very constitution of the body, and infect its fluids according to the laws of nature: whence it is that the due crasis of the blood and health of the body depend upon the temperature of the air and weather. Hence arise *pestilential* and *epidemical* diseases; nor could they be avoided, unless the animals had been made of a quite different frame and constitution. Nay, whatever state they had been placed in, they would have been subject either to these or others no less pernicious. For marble, and the very hardest bodies, are dissolved by the vicissitudes of heat and cold, moist and dry, and the other changes which we are insensible of; how much more the humours and animal spirits of man, on a right temperature of which life depends? God might indeed, by a favour peculiar to us, have expelled all the contagions arising from these alterations, or provided that they should not hurt us. But what reason have such sinners as we now are, to expect it? It is more agreeable to the justice of God to leave the elements to themselves, to be carried according to the laws of motion for our punishment. (35.) Neither ought we to wonder that
God

N O T E S.

(34.) Our author's argument here seems to be framed rather in compliance with the common method, that in strict conformity to his own scheme of the τὸ βέλτιον, or absolute *Meliority* in things:
which

God denies the guilty a favour, which even the innocent have no right to : nay, we ought to think that he has inflicted a very light penalty on rebellious men : for since the natural evils we are forced to struggle with are for the most part of such a nature as could not be warded off, but by the particular extraordinary favour of the deity, God should seem rather to have resumed a free gift, than inflicted a punishment, when he is pleased to permit them.

Rocks and
deserts are
given not
to man but
to other ani-
mals for
their habi-
tation,

IV. If the earth had been made for the use of man alone, we might have expected that there should be nothing in it that was prejudicial or useless to him ; but since it was made, as we have observed *, for the benefit of the universe, man is placed therein, not because it was created for him only, but because it could afford him a convenient habitation : for God must be supposed in this case not to have adapted the place to the inhabitants, but the inhabitants to the place. If therefore man can dwell commodiously enough in these regions of the earth which are fit for his purpose, he must allow God in his goodness

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which system maintains that God is still infinitely beneficent, or as kind as possible to all, or dispenses every thing for the very best in the main. Though what is here introduced by way of punishment, may, if rightly understood, be defended as an instance of the greatest possible kindness ; since the only end of all the divine judgments is either the correction and amendment of the offenders themselves, or admonition to others, or both : and consequently is a means of the greatest good to mankind in general, and the very best dispensation towards them in this degenerate corrupt estate, and the most proper method of fitting them for, or directing and drawing them to a better. And if all this can be effected by the same general laws of nature, which also bring plenty, health and happiness to the world, here is a double demonstration of the wisdom and goodness of its author.

goodness to give the earth as many other inhabitants as it can sustain consistently with the good of men. Neither ought he to repine that the rocks and deserts, which are of no use to men, supply the *serpents* and *wild-beasts* with coverts. But these, you will say, sometimes invade the countries which are most delightful, and best stored with conveniencies for human life; destroy the fruits and cultivated fields, and kill the men themselves by *bites* and *poisons*. I grant it; but it may be questioned whether it has been always so.

V. For in the first place, this evil might have had its origin from man himself; *viz.* rage might be given to the lion, and venom to the serpent, for the punishment of mankind; and this ancient histories, both sacred and prophane, declare. But since this question was first moved by such as either denied revealed religion, or at least were ignorant of it, I would not call that in to our assistance, or make any other use of it than as a bare hypothesis.

VI. We may affirm then in the second place, that those things happen through the fault of men, who by wars and discord make fruitful and rich countries void of inhabitants to till them, and leave them to the possession of wild-beasts and venomous insects: since therefore they neither cultivate them themselves, nor allow other persons to do it, what wonder is it if God, for the reproach of men, give them up to be inhabited by brutes, wild-beasts, and insects? those parts which we have deserted belong by right to them, nor do they otherwise multiply more than is proper.

VII. Thirdly, It is no more repugnant to the Divine Goodness to have made an animal, by the We may more easily avoid wild the

beasts and venomous creatures than other inconveniences of life, about which we never quarrel with providence.

the bite of which a man might be destroyed, than a precipice: There is nothing in the whole earth but what may hurt or kill a man, if it be not used with caution: meat, drink, water, fire. Must these then not be created, because they may hurt a man? nor is it more difficult to be aware of poisons and wild-beasts, than of these: nay, scarce one is killed by poison or torn by wild-beasts of a thousand that die by the sword; and yet we do not at all blame the divine goodness for this. It may be said, that iron, earth, water, meats and drinks, are necessary, and on that account, the evils attending them may be tolerated. And who will undertake to assure us that venomous animals and wild-beasts are not necessary? must we reckon them entirely useless, because we do not know the use of them? must we say that every wheel in a clock is made for no manner of purpose, which a rustic understands not the design of! but suppose we grant that these are of no service to us, yet may they not please and enjoy themselves? *

All animals are under the divine care: to think otherwise savours of pride.

VIII. You may urge, that these are not worth the notice of the Divine Providence. Thus indeed proud mortals, admirers of themselves alone, despise the works of God: but it is not so with the Divine Goodness, which chose that some inconvenience should befall mankind rather than a whole species be wanting to nature.

Beasts and venomous creatures are of use to men.

IX. If you insist, that a lion might have been made without teeth or claws, a viper without venom; I grant it, as a knife without an edge: but then they would have been of quite another species, and have had neither the nature, nor use, nor genius, which they now enjoy. In short, I say once for all, they are not in vain. The very
serpents

* See note 22.

serpents, though a race hateful to us, have their uses; among the rest they may serve to gather poison out of the earth. (36.) Nor is the country less habitable where they are, than where they are not. Now, *ceteris paribus*, animals ought to multiply; for life is a perfection: and since it is as noble a one as matter will admit of, it is preferable to none at all. It is therefore the work and gift of God wherever he has bestowed it, and does not stand in need of an *evil principle* for its author.

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(36.) For an account of the various ends and uses of these noxious animals, poisonous plants, &c. see *Barham's* answer to the above mentioned objection, in his *Phys. Theol.* b. 2. ch. 6. with the references; and *Ray on the Creation*, part 2. p. 432, &c. 4th edit. Or *Chambers's Cyclopædia*, under the word *Poison*.

SECT. VIII.

Concerning the Errors and Ignorance of Man.

SINCE man (nay every created being) is necessarily of a limited nature, it is plain that he cannot know every thing. The most perfect creatures therefore are ignorant of many things: nor can they attain to any other knowledge than what is agreeable to their nature and condition. Innumerable truths therefore lie hid from every created understanding: for perfect and infinite knowledge belongs to God alone; and it must be determined by his pleasure what degree every one

* See note 18.

one is to be endowed with : for he only knows the nature and necessity of each, and has given what is agreeable thereto. *Ignorance* is therefore an *evil of defect*, and no more to be avoided than the other kind of *imperfection* ; for an imperfect nature (as that of all creatures is) understands also imperfectly.

We are sometimes forced to make use of conjectures, therefore we may not only be ignorant, but also mistaken.

II. As to human knowledge, it is confessed that we acquire it by the senses ; and that certain characters denote, not so much the *nature*, as the *uses* and *differences* of things. Now, since things very different internally, have sometimes the same external marks, we must of necessity be often doubtful and sometimes deceived by the similitude of the marks.

Neither is it sufficient to the avoiding of error that we suspend our assent in doubtful cases ; for it is often necessary for us (especially if we have to do with other persons) to act upon conjecture, and resolve upon action, before we have thoroughly discussed the point or discovered the truth : on which account it is impossible that we should totally avoid errors. God must therefore either have made no such animal as man is, or one that is liable to errors. As contrariety results from motion, which is as it were the action of matter ; so a possibility of error is consequent upon the action of a finite being.

God could not always guard us from errors without violence done to nature.

III. If any one reply, that God can immediately reveal the truth to us in such cases : I answer, he may so, nor can it be denied that he has done and will do it sometimes : but that this should be done always, would be a violence repugnant to the nature and condition of man, and could not possibly be done without more and greater evils arising from an interruption of the course of nature. Now we must distinguish between

tween those errors which we fall into after our utmost diligence and application, and such as we are led into by carelessness, negligence, and a depraved will. Errors of the former kind are to be reckoned among natural evils, and not imputed to us: for they arise from the very state and condition of the mind of man, and are not to be avoided, unless God would change the species of beings, and order that different things should not affect the senses in the same manner, that is, that there should be no more species nor individuals than there are sensations in us: for if the number of these exceed the discrimination of our sensations, variety of them must necessarily produce either the very same sensations in us, or none at all, and a great many answer to the same sensation; so that we must certainly be sometimes imposed upon by the similitude of things. Either then the distinctions of our sensations must be multiplied *in infinitum*, or the infinite variety of sensible objects taken away. But it is evident, that neither could have been done in this present state. We must, therefore, bear the inconvenience not only of being ignorant of innumerable things, but also of erring in many cases.

IV. To this it may be replied, That error is a defect in that part of man, in the perfection of which his happiness chiefly consists: If, therefore, he may naturally fall into errors, it follows that man may be naturally miserable without his fault. But I answer: Any particular evil does not bring misery upon us; otherwise every creature would be miserable, as of necessity labouring under the evils of *imperfection*. He only, therefore, is to be denominated *miserable*, who is oppressed with more and greater evils than

Man is not
therefore
miserable
because
exposed to
errors.

Those errors we fall into without our fault are seldom pernicious.

than his good can requite with happiness; so that upon balancing the conveniencies and inconveniencies of life, it were better for him not to be, than to be.

V. It is to be observed also, that God has in his wisdom and goodness so tempered our present state, that we very seldom, if ever, fall into grievous and pernicious errors without our own fault. But if this ever comes to pass, as soon as the evil preponderates, life is taken away together with the benefits of nature. Now, it is to be esteemed an happiness, and an argument of the divine goodness, that the natural benefits of life cannot be taken from us, but life is taken from us also. Life then can be a burden to none; nor is it necessary that any one should withdraw himself from natural evils by voluntarily putting an end to his life. For if these evils be such as take away the benefits of life, they also bring it to an end. God produced all things out of nothing, and gave us being without our advice; he seems therefore obliged in justice not to suffer us to be reduced to a state that is worse than non-entity. (37.) When, therefore, any state is overwhelmed with evils which outweigh the good, it is reasonable that God should remit us to our former state; that is, let us return to nothing. Neither ought we to accuse the divine power and goodness, which has bestowed as many blessings and benefits upon us, as either the whole universe or our own nature

ture

NOTES.

(37.) It would be so indeed, if this were our only state; but as it is at present, I fear many have nothing but the hopes and expectations of another to support them under almost complete misery; to comfort and encourage them to undergo evils

ture would admit of; and since it was impossible but that some time or other, upon the increase of evils, his gift (*viz.* life) must become burdensome; when this happens he breaks off its thread.

VI. But man, you'll say, is ignorant of those things which it was his greatest interest to know, ^{Our knowledge is adapted to our state.} namely, of truths that are necessary to the attainment of felicity. It was convenient for our present state to understand these; and who will affirm that God has not bestow'd upon us all the knowledge that is agreeable to our state? We ought therefore never to be deceived about such truths as these, while we apply all our diligence to the search. I answer; If this be understood of the happiness due to us in this life, 'tis very true; nor is our understanding ever so far mistaken as not to inform us of the truths necessary to this kind of happiness, if proper care be not wanting. But such happiness ought to suffice us, as may serve to make life a blessing, and better than the absence of it. A greater indeed was promised to the first man by a *gratuitous covenant*, (38.) but when that was once broken by sin, he and his posterity

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evils greater than all the benefits of life; evils which make life itself an evil, and (as our author says) put them into a state worse than nothing. Witness the long and acute torments of numerous martyrs, the pains of confessors, the labours of common gally-slaves, &c. (this is granted by the author, *vid.* Sermon on the *Fall*, p. 77. 4 last lines, and p. 81. l. 2.) But the least hint of this is sufficient, and the common answers to it very satisfactory; as will perhaps appear from the references to the last chapter of the appendix, where this question comes more properly under consideration,

(38.) Though the first man might have been created more perfect in all his faculties than any of his posterity (which, as some think, cannot be easily proved from the account we have of him in

terity were remanded to those imperfect notices which could be had from an imperfect understanding, and the information of the senses; which yet are not in the least to be despised: neither had man a right, nor could he naturally attain to a greater perfection. For when the faculties of our souls were injured, and the health and vigour of our bodies impaired by our own vices, as well as those of our parents, our natural perfections must necessarily be impaired also. For since our knowledge is to be acquired by care, industry, and instruction, if mankind had continued innocent, and with diligent care communicated true notions of things to their posterity

NOTES.

in *Genesis**) though his knowledge might have been much clearer, as coming entire and adult from the immediate hand of his Creator; yet it seems highly probable that this could not have been propagated in a natural way, that is, by any general pre-established laws, as our present faculties are; but mankind, as a successive body, must necessarily have been left to the known laws of propagation, and the present method of improving their intellects, and deriving all their notice from the common sources of sensation and reflection. And so our bountiful Creator may be supposed to have deprived mankind of no blessings he could consistently with his other attributes and the order of the creation, possibly have bestowed. Nay, why may not he be thought to have converted even this necessary, unavoidable imperfection in us, compared with the first *Adam*, into a greater perfection arising both from our notions of his fall, and the consequences of it, and of the wonderful remedy prepared for it and promised in the second *Adam*? We seem to be made more highly sensible of the infinite wisdom and goodness of God, and more thankful for our condition, from our knowledge of his just permission of so deserv'd a fall, and his gracious undeserv'd exaltation of us again to a superior state, than if we had conceiv'd the misery attending human nature

* See Bayle under the Word *Adam*, Remark D. Taylor on *Original Sin*. p. 170. &c. 3d *Scheme of Script. Div.* C. 9. Curcellæi *Instit. Relig. Christi*. L. 3. C. 8. p. 108, &c. And *dissert. de Pecc. Orig.* §. 11. Or *Episcop. Instit. Theol.* L. 4. C. 6, 7. p. 358, 359. Or our Author's *Sermon on the Fall*.

rity; and had not infected their offspring by example, instruction, or any contagion attending propagation, we should have been less liable to errors; nay, free from pernicious ones; and have enjoyed a more perfect knowledge of

nature to be (as perhaps most of it was) a necessary consequence of our being created in this inferior class. But whether this notion be allowed or not, the scheme of Providence relating *Paradise*, &c. as deliver'd in Holy Scripture, if taken all together, can be no just objection against the moral attributes of God. He created man entirely innocent, and absolutely free, which freedom was absolutely necessary to his happiness: (as will appear under the head of Moral Evil) He gave him the means and abilities to compleat his happiness, and placed him in a world every way suited to his condition. This liberty made it possible for him to lose that innocence, though he had but one single opportunity of doing it*, and it was highly reasonable and necessary that he should have that†. This one opportunity he embraced (which it does not seem possible for God himself, though he fore-saw it, to have prevented, consistently with that freedom he had for good reasons given him and determined thus to exercise) and so altered his nature and circumstances, and consequently made it necessary for God also to change his place and condition, and to withdraw such extraordinary favours as his wisdom and goodness might otherwise have thought proper to bestow. Thus with his innocence man lost all title to a continuance in Paradise, and of consequence became naturally liable to the common evils and calamities of a transitory life, and the pains frequently attending its conclusion. Those that descended from him and partook of the same nature, must necessarily partake of the same infirmities; in particular, they must inherit *corruption and mortality*. Which evils, though we now lament them as the chief parts of our fore-father's punishment, yet could they not in the present circumstances of things be prevented; nor indeed, were such a prevention possible, would it be in the main desirable, as will appear from the following Section, par. 6, 7. Nay these, by a most wonderful scheme of Providence, are infinitely outweighed, and made the means of bringing us to much greater happiness, by faith in him who was promised from the beginning, and hath in these latter days brought *life and incorruptibility* to light. See more on this subject in note (U.) and note 81.

* See Nichols's *Conference with a Theist*, p. 220, 221. 1st Edition.

† See Dr. J. Clarke on *Moral Evil*, p. 211, &c. and Limborch *Theol. Christ.* L. 3. C. 2. §. 2. and Jenkins's *Reason. of the Christ. Relig.* Vol. 2. C. 19. p. 353. 5th. Edit.

of things. For our native intellectual faculty would have been stronger; and being better furnished both with the means and principles of science than we now are, we should more easily have prevented the occasions of error. All pernicious errors therefore, at least in matters of necessity, are to be imputed to our own guilt, or that of our parents*.

We prefer life, with all its inconveniences, before death.

VII. If any be so ungrateful as to murmur still, and affirm that he would not accept of life on these conditions, if he might have his choice; and that himself is the best judge of his own interest, and he no benefactor that obtrudes a gift upon a man against his will; that consequently he owes no thanks to God on account of a life which he would willingly refuse: We must reply, that thus indeed impious men and fools are used to prate; but this does not come from their hearts and consciences. For none are more afraid of death, none more tenacious of life than they that talk thus idly. A great many of them profess that they don't believe a future life; and if so, they may reduce themselves to the wish'd-for state of annihilation as soon as they please, and cast off that *existence* which is so disagreeable. No person therefore, except he be corrupted in his judgment and indulge himself in error, can seriously prefer non-existence to the present life. (39.)

VIII. But

NOTES.

(39.) * Self-murder is so unnatural a sin, that 'tis now-a-days thought reason enough to prove a man distracted. We have too many sad examples what a disturbed imagination will do, if that must pass for natural distraction; but we seldom or never hear that more external sufferings, how severe soever, tempt men to kill themselves. The *Stoics* themselves, whose principle it

was

* For what relates to the doctrine of Original Sin, &c. See the latter end of the next Section, and note 4to.

VIII. But if any one think so from his heart, he is not fallen into this opinion from any natural evil, but from others which he brought upon himself by *wrong elections*. We see many persons weary of life, but 'tis because of their bad management, lest they should be ridiculous for missing of honour, of riches, or some empty end which they have unreasonably proposed to themselves. But very few have been excited to self-murder by any natural and absolutely unavoidable evil or error. Life therefore, of what kind soever it is, must be looked upon as a benefit in the judgment of mankind, and we ought to pay our grateful acknowledgments to God, as the powerful and beneficent author of it. Nor will it be any prejudice to the Divine Goodness, if one or two throw life away in despair. For it is to be supposed that this proceeds not from the greatness of any natural evil, but from impatience arising from some depraved election; of which more hereafter. For none of the brutes which are destitute of free-will, ever quitted its life spontaneously, through the uneasiness of grief, or a distemper. If any man therefore has killed himself voluntarily, we must conclude that he did this, as all other wicked actions, by a depraved choice.

Some put themselves to death, not on account of natural, but voluntary evils.

IX. As to the second sort of errors into which we are led, not by nature but carelessness, negligence

Those errors which we fall into

N O T E S.

' was to break their prison when they found themselves uneasy, very rarely put it into practice: Nature was too strong for their philosophy. And though their philosophy allowed them to die when they pleased, yet nature taught them to live as long as they could; and we see that they seldom thought themselves miserable enough to die.' *Sherlock on Providence*, C. 7. p. 249; 2^d Edit. See also note (W.)

Q.

to by our own fault, are to be reckoned among moral evils. gence, curiosity, or a depraved will, the number of these is greater and their effects more pernicious : nay, it is these only which load and infest life with intolerable evils, so as to make us wish that we had never been. But since they come upon us through our own fault, they are not to be reckoned among *natural evils*, but belong to the third kind, *viz.* the *moral*, to which we hasten : but must first sum up what has been delivered in this chapter.

S E C T. IX.

Containing the Sum of what has been said on Natural Evils.

The whole universe one system, of which every thing is a part. **I**N order to give the reader a better view of what has been said, we must conceive this whole world as one system, whereof all particular things are the parts and members, and every one has its place and office, as the members have in our own body, or the beams in a house ; the doors, windows, chambers and closets : neither is there any thing useless or superfluous in the whole. And in order to unite all more closely together, nothing is self-sufficient ; but as it is qualified to help others, so it stands in need of the help of others, for its more commodious subsistence. And though in so immense a machine, we do not so clearly perceive the connection or mutual dependence of the parts in every respect, yet we are certain that the thing is so. In many cases it is so evident, that he will be esteemed a mad-man

man who denies it. Since therefore the world is to be looked upon as one building, we must recollect how many different parts, and how various, so grand, so magnificent an edifice should consist of. We may design a house divided into halls, parlours and closets; but unless there be a kitchen too, and places set apart for more ignoble, more uncomely offices, it will not be fit for habitation. The same may be affirmed of the world and the frame of it. God could have filled it all with suns: but who will engage that such a system would be capable of living creatures, or proper to preserve motion? he could have made the earth of gold or gems: but in the meanwhile *destitute of inhabitants*. He that has lived a day or two without food, would prefer a *dung-bill* to such an earth. God could have created man *immortal*, without passions, without a sense of pleasure or pain; but he must have been without a *solid body* also, and an inhabitant of some other region, not the earth. He could have made the whole human *body* an *eye*, but then it would have been unfit for motion, nutrition, and all the other functions of life. He could have taken away the contrariety of *appetites*, but the contrariety of motions (nay motion itself) must have been taken away with it. He could have prevented the frustrating of appetites, but that must have been by making them not *opposite*; for it is impossible that contrary appetites, or such as desire what is at the same time occupied by others, should all at once be satisfied. He could, in the last place, have framed man *free from errors*, but then he must not have made use of matter for an organ of sensation, which the very nature of our soul requires.

If the whole and all its parts be taken together, it could not possibly be better, if any part could be changed for the better, another would be worse; if one abounded with greater conveniences, another would be exposed to greater evils; and that necessarily from the imperfection of all creatures. A creature is descended from *God*, a most *perfect father*; but from *nothing*, as its *mother*, which is imperfection itself. All finite things therefore partake of nothing, and are nothing beyond their bounds. When therefore we are come to the bounds which nature has set, whoever perceives any thing, must necessarily perceive also that he is deficient, and seek for something without himself to support him. Hence come evils, hence opposition of things, and as it were a mutilation in the work of God. Hence for the most part men fear and desire, grieve and rejoice. Hence errors and darkness of the mind. Hence troops of miseries marching through human life: whether these grow for the punishment of mortals, or attend life by the *necessity* of nature; that is, whether they proceed from the constitution of nature itself, or are external and acquired by our choice. Nor need we the bloody *battle* of the *Ancients*, nor the *malicious* god of the *Manichees* for authors of them. Nor is it any argument against the Divine Omnipotence, that he could not free a creature in its own nature necessarily imperfect, from that native imperfection, and the evils consequent upon it. He might, as we have often said, have not created mortal inhabitants, and such as were liable to fears and griefs: nor, as will be declared below, such as by their depraved elections might deserve punishment;

ment: but with regard to the system of the whole it was necessary that he should create these or none at all: either the earth must be replenished with these, or left destitute of inhabitants. Nor could any of the foregoing particulars be omitted, but that very omission would bring along with it much greater evils.

III. From hence sprang the error of the *epicureans*, who pretended that this world was unworthy of a good and powerful God. They, we may believe, knew only the least part, and as it were the sink of the world, *viz.* our *earth*. They never considered the good and beautiful part of nature, but only contemplated the griefs, diseases, death and destruction of mortals, when they denied that God was the author of so many evils: In the interim they forgot that the earth is in a manner the filth and offscouring of the *mundane system*: and that the workmanship of God is no more to be condemned for it, than a judgment is to be formed of the beauty of an house from the sink or jakes. They were ignorant also that the earth was made in the manner it now is, not for itself alone, but in order to be subservient to the good of the whole; and that it is filled with such animals as it is capable of, with a due subordination to the good of the universe, and the felicity of souls that inhabit the purer and brighter parts of this fabric, *viz.* the *æther* and the *heavens*. These are as it were the gardens, parks, and palaces of the world; this earth the *dunghill*, or (as some will have it) the workhouse. Nor is it a greater wonder that God should make these, than the *intestines*, and less comely, but yet necessary parts of a human body. Lastly, they are unmindful that more and greater good is to be found here than evil, otherwise they

Hence the error of the *Epicureans* who knew only the least and worst part.

they themselves would reject life: and he that has more good than evil is not miserable except he will. If therefore we could compare the good things with the evil; if we could view the whole workmanship of God; if we thoroughly understood the connection, subordinations, and mutual relation of things, the mutual assistance which they afford each other; and lastly, the whole series and order of them; it would appear that the world is as well as it could possibly be; and that no evil in it could be avoided, which would not occasion a greater by its absence.

Hence a
reply to
the diffi-
culty,
*whence
comes
evil?*
Since it a-
rises from
the very
nature of
created
beings,
it could
not be a-
voided
without a
contradiction,

IV. We have endeavoured to clear up these points, and I hope effectually, as to this kind of evil. For upon the supposition of our principles, (which by the way, are commonly acknowledged) some natural evils must inevitably be admitted; and if even one could arise in the work of an infinitely wise and good God, there is no occasion for the *bad principle* as the origin of evil, for evil might have existed notwithstanding the Divine Omnipotence and infinite goodness. The difficult question then, *whence comes evil?* is not unanswerable. For it arises from the very nature and constitution of created beings, and could not be avoided without a contradiction. And though we be not able to apply these principles to all particular cases and circumstances, yet we are sure enough that they may be applied. Nor should we be concerned at our being at a loss to account for some particulars; since this is common in the solution of almost all natural phenomena, and yet we acquiesce. For presupposing some principles, such as matter, motion, &c. though we are ignorant what matter and motion are in any particular body, yet from the variety of these we take it for granted that various com-
positions

positions and qualities proceed. In like manner we are persuaded, that from the various kinds of imperfection necessarily inherent in things, various species of evils arise, though in some the manner in which this comes to pass does not appear; agreeably to what we experience in light and colours. We are certain that colours arise from the different disposition, refraction and reflection of light; but yet none can certainly tell how it is reflected or refracted when it forms a blew, a green, or any other colour: so that I dare affirm that the origin of natural evil is more easily assigned, and more clearly and particularly solved, than that of colours, tastes, or any sensible quality whatsoever.

V. I confess, that according to this hypothesis, natural evils proceed from the original condition of things, and are not permitted by God, but in order to prevent greater; which some perhaps may think repugnant to sacred history and the doctrine of *Moses*. For they will have it, that the abuse of free-will was the cause of all natural evils, and that when God created every thing good and perfect in its kind, it was afterwards corrupted by sin, and subjected to natural evils; but this is asserted without proof. For the scripture no where teaches that there would have been no manner of natural evil, if man had not sinned. God indeed made all things good and perfect in their kind, that is, he created and still preserves every thing in a state and condition suitable to the whole system of beings, and which it need have no reason to repent of except it will. But neither the goodness of God, nor the perfection that belongs to the nature of things, required that all natural evils should be removed: some created beings have evils inherent in their very natures,

This reconciled with the *Mosaic* history, which does not attribute all kinds of natural evil to the fall of the first man.

natures, which God must of necessity either tolerate or not create those things in which they do inhere. If therefore the sacred history be carefully examined, it will appear that some kinds of evil are attributed to the sin of the first man, but others not. Of the former kind are, *first*, the *mortality* of man, who would otherwise have been immortal by *grace*. *Secondly*, the *barrenness* of the earth, and growth of *noxious* and *unprofitable plants* in the room of such as were fit for *food*, for the punishment of mankind. *Thirdly*, that hard *labour* necessary for providing food, which is a consequence of the former. *Fourthly*, that *impotent affection* and necessity of obedience whereby *women* are made subject to *men*. *Fifthly*, the pains of *child-birth*. *Sixthly*, the *enmity* between man and the serpentine kind. *Seventhly*, banishment out of paradise, *i. e.* as appears to me, an expulsion out of that state of grace, in which the favour of God had placed man above what was due to his nature. These, and some others, are expressly enumerated as punishments of the first fall. (40.) But besides these there are many consequent upon the necessity of matter, and concerning which the scripture has nothing to induce us to believe that they arose from sin.

VI. It

NOTES.

(40.) For an account of the scripture history relating to the fall of Adam, and the consequences of it, both upon himself and his posterity, see *Ibbot's Boyle's Lect.* serm. 5. 2d sett. *Rymer's General Representation of Rev. Rel.* part 1. c. 4. and *Dr. J. Clarke on Moral Evil*, p. 224, &c. or *D'Oyly's Four Dissertations*, c. 1. p. 3. note b. and c. 9. p. 97, &c. or *Bp. Taylor's Polemical Discourses*, p. 614, 615, 623. See also *Limborch's Theol. Christ.* 1. 3. c. 3, 4, 5. or *Episcopius de Libero Arbitrio*, &c. or *Curcellæi Rel. Christ. Infit.* 1. 3. c. 14, 15, 16. and his *Dissert. de Pecc. Originis*, or our author's sermon on the *fall*.

VI. It is to be observed farther, that these are not permitted by God to no purpose, but for the good of the universe, and at the same time of man himself. For as to mortality, it was by no means expedient for the system, that a sinful creature should enjoy immortality, which was not owing to its nature, but granted by an extraordinary favour of the Deity. Nay, God seems to have forbidden our first parents the use of the tree of life out of mere compassion, lest if their life should by virtue of it be prolonged, they should live for ever miserable. Even this punishment, as all others, contributes to the restraint of bad elections, and the preparation of a new way to happiness. For when man transgressed, and a perverse abuse of his free-will was once introduced, there would have been no end of madness if the Divine Goodness had continued to preserve life, understanding, an easy food, and other gifts of the primeval state, to the abusers thereof, as well as to the innocent. It is notorious how exorbitant bad elections are even amongst the cares and labours which mortals undergo in providing the necessities of life; and how pernicious strength of parts becomes, when upon a corruption of the will it degenerates into cunning. How much more intolerable then would it be, if the fear of death were away: if the same facility of procuring food, the same vigour of intellect, which our first parents enjoyed, were continued to their corrupt posterity? (*)

The evils which arise from thence are permitted for the good of the universe, and also of man himself.

VII. Nay,

* See *Sherlock upon Death*, c. 2. § 1. and c. 3. § 3. As to the vigour of our first parent's intellect, see the authors referred to in the beginning of note 3^d, particularly *D'Cyly's* first dissertation, C. 2.

Mortality
Hunger,
Thirst,
Diseases,
&c. are
for the
good of
the World
in this
corrupt
Estate.

VII. Nay, to confess the truth, it could not possibly continue; for let there be never so great plenty of provision, it might be corrupted by the voluntary act of one man. When our first parent had, therefore, once transgressed, what hopes could he conceive of his posterity? Or, by what right could they claim the supernatural gifts of God? certainly, by none. All then are made mortal, not only through the *justice*, but the *goodness* of God. For while men are obliged to struggle with hunger, thirst, diseases and troubles, few of them are at leisure to run quite mad, and leap over all the bounds of nature by their depraved elections. It is better, therefore, for us to undergo all these inconveniences, than to be left to ourselves without restraint in this corrupt estate. For by that means we should bring upon ourselves still greater evils. But these things belong to revealed religion, and this is not a proper place to treat on them at large. (41.)

C H A P.

N O T E S

(41.) Thus our author has, I think, sufficiently accounted for all sorts of Natural Evil, and demonstrated the *raison d'être*, or mediocrity of things in the universe, taking the whole (as we always ought) together: at least, he has laid down such principles as may easily and effectually be applied to that end. He has clearly proved, and closely pursued this one single proposition through all the abovementioned particulars, *viz.* that *not one of those evils or inconveniences in our system could have been prevented without a greater*: which is an ample vindication of all the divine attributes, in the original frame and government thereof. And, indeed, this seems to be the best and most convincing, if not the only proper method of handling the argument and examining the works of God, so as to attain a due sense of, and regard for the author of them. Which maxim, therefore, we conclude from the numberless instances of its apparent validity, ought to be allowed, and may be safely insisted on, though by reason of our great ignorance of nature, it cannot always be so clearly applied. However, it has been applied successfully to the solution of the most material difficulties in the present question, as may appear more fully from the authors referred to in the foregoing chapter.

C H A P. V.

Of MORAL EVIL.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

Containing the Substance of the Chapter.

HAVING given some account of *natural evils*, the *moral* come next under consideration: we are now to trace out the origin of these, and see of what kind it is, whether they flow from the same source with the natural, *viz.* the necessary *imperfection* of created beings; or, we are to seek for some other entirely different from it.

By *moral evils*, as we said before, are understood those inconveniencies of life and condition which befall ourselves or others through wrong elections. For it is plain, that some inconveniencies happen without our knowledge, or against our wills, by the very order of natural causes; whereas, others come upon us knowingly, and in a manner with our consent (when we choose either these themselves, or such as are necessarily connected with them.) The *moral*

ral are to be reckoned among the latter kind of inconveniencies: and he must be esteemed the cause of them, who knowingly, and of his own accord, brings them either upon himself or others by a depraved or foolish choice.

But, in order, to make this whole matter concerning Moral Evils more fully understood, we must consider in the

- 1st Place, *What the nature of Elections is.*
 - 2dly, *That our happiness chiefly depends upon Elections.*
 - 3dly, *What kind of Elections may be said to be made amiss, or foolishly.*
 - 4thly, *How we come to fall into depraved or wicked Elections.*
 - 5thly, *How such Elections can be reconciled with the power and goodness of God.*
-

S E C T. I.

Concerning the Nature of Elections.

S U B S E C T. I.

A View of their Opinion, who admit of Freedom from Compulsion only, but not from Necessity.

That it is not easy to understand or give a true representation of the opinions

I. **I**F there be any thing obscure and difficult in Philosophy, we are sure to find it in that part which treats of Elections and Liberty. There is no point about which the learned are less consistent with themselves, or more divided from each other. Nor is it an easy matter to understand

understand them, or to give a certain and true representation of their opinions. I think they may be distinguished into two sects, both admitting of liberty, the one from external *compulsion*, but not from internal *necessity*; the other from both.

II. As far as I can understand the opinion of the former, it is this: First, they observe that there are certain *appetites* implanted in us by nature, which are not to be esteemed *useless*, but contributing toward our preservation, as was shewn before; and that some things are naturally agreeable, some contrary to these appetites: that the *former*, when present, please and impress a delightful sense of themselves; the *latter* displease and create uneasiness. These, therefore, are called incommodious, troublesome and evil; and those commodious, convenient and good.

III. Secondly, That nature has given us *reason*, a *mind* or *intellect*, to distinguish conveniencies from inconveniencies, good from evil. And since this may be considered by the mind in a threefold respect, hence also arise three kinds of good and evil; namely *pleasant*, *profitable*, and *honest*.

IV. For if good be considered as present with regard only to the appetite which is delighted with the enjoyment of it, and acquiesces in it, it is called *pleasant*.

V. If it be not agreeable to the appetite of itself, but only *connected* with something else which is of itself agreeable, or produces pleasure, then it is called *profitable*. For though the appetite cannot come at the immediate enjoyment of it, yet the mind makes use of it, in order

concerning liberty. Some acknowledge a liberty from compulsion only, others from necessity also.

The authors of the former opinion suppose appetites implanted in us by nature; what is agreeable to these is called good; the contrary, evil.

Things are agreeable to the appetites in a three-fold respect. Hence three kinds of good.

That which is actually agreeable is called pleasant. That which is connected

with
something
which is
of itself a-
greeable,
is called
profitable.

That
which is
judged by
the un-
derstand-
ing to be
the best,
all things
considered,
is ab-
solutely
good, and
called ho-
nest.

Instances
in health,
medicines
and such
things as
are agree-
able to the
rational
appetite.

order to procure those things which it can enjoy, and from thence it is esteemed *convenient*, *i. e.* good.

VI. But since that which is agreeable to one appetite, may be repugnant, or less agreeable to others; and that which pleases now, may have some things connected with it which may be displeasing afterwards, there is need of enquiry and deliberation, to procure an absolute good, *i. e.* one which, all appetites and times considered, will afford as great, as certain and durable a pleasure or delight as possible. For this end, therefore, was the mind or understanding given us, that we might be able to determine what appears fittest to be done upon a view of all such things as create pleasure or uneasiness for the present or the future. And what is thus judged by the understanding to be the best, if there be no error in the case, must be looked upon as *honest*. For that is *honest* which is agreeable to a rational agent; but it is agreeable to a rational agent, and reason itself directs, that, all things considered, we should prefer that which brings the greater, the more certain and more durable advantages.

VII. The defenders of this opinion reckon these kinds of good to be *moral*, so far as they respect man, because they fall under the government of reason. But since all things cannot be always had together, a comparison must be made between them, and that embraced which appears to be the best. Now the kinds may be compared together, as well as the particulars of each kind. For instance, health is a thing pleasant in itself, and desirable above all things that relate to the body; but for the preservation of it medicines must be sometimes taken

taken, which of themselves are far from being agreeable to the appetite, but as they are means to an end which in itself is delightful, they are said to be profitable, and on that account fit to be chosen. Now the goods of the mind are greater, more certain and more durable than those of the body; if, therefore, they cannot be had without the loss of health, or even life, right reason dictates, that health, or even life be despised in regard to these. For this appears to be the most convenient, all things considered, and on that account is *honest*: and as goods of a different kind may be compared together, so may also particulars of the same kind, as any one will find that considers it.

VIII. As to *liberty*, the men of this sect will have it to consist in this, that among all those goods, an agent can embrace that which pleases him best, and exert those actions which his own reason approves: For, according to these men, he that can follow his own *judgment* in matters is free. For example, he that is sound in body, and has his faculties and limbs entire, if all external impediments be removed, is at liberty to walk: for he can if he *will*, and nothing but his will is wanting to exert that action.

He that can act as his own judgment directs, is free according to these men.

IX. But as to the actions of the *will* itself, namely, to *will*, or to *suspend* the act of volition, they think that it is determined to these, not by itself, for that is impossible; but from without. If you ask from whence? They answer, from the *pleasure* or *uneasiness* perceived by the understanding or the senses; but rather, as they imagine, from the present or most urgent *uneasiness*: since, therefore, these are produced in us *ab extra*, not from the will itself, and are not in its

But we are determined to choose either from the goodness or disagreeableness of objects perceived by the intellect or senses: and there-

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power,

fore not
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to its de-
termina-

power, but arise from the very things themselves; it is manifest, according to these men, that we are not free (at least from *necessity*) to *will* or *not will*, that is, with regard to the immediate acts of the will. Some of them, therefore, expressly deny, that *liberty* belongs to man with regard to these acts, or that an election can be said to be free, or man himself in that respect: they will have it, therefore, that *liberty* belongs to us properly with respect to the *inferior* faculties, which are subject to the government of the will, and discharge their functions when the man himself has willed: that is, a man is free to walk who can walk if he pleases; but not to will; for he receives the will to walk from elsewhere: nevertheless, he that can *do* what he wills, according to them, is free, even though he be necessarily determined to will. (42.)

X. If

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(42.) The most remarkable defenders of this opinion, among the Moderns, seem to be *Hobbs*, *Locke*, (if he be made consistent with himself*) *Leibnitz*, *Bayle*, *Norris*, the *Authors of the Philosophical Enquiry concerning Human Liberty*, and of *Cato's Letters*. But in order to have a more distinct notion of the different schemes of writers all professing to treat of *human liberty*, *free will*, &c. Let us in the first place recite the several powers or modifications of the mind, and observe to which of them liberty is or may be applied.—These are commonly distinguished into *perception*; *judgment*, *volition* and *action*. The two former are generally *necessary*, at least, always *passive*: For I cannot help seeing a light when my eyes are open, nor avoid judging that two and two make four, whenever I think of that proposition. The will then may properly enough be said to influence or impede these †; but this doth not make them less *passive* in themselves; nay, the more it does influence them, the more evidently they are so. The third appears to be the exercise of a *self moving principle*, and as such cannot properly be moved or influenced by any thing else. The last is the exercise of the *inferior powers*, the actual production of thought or motion: this is generally directed by, and an immediate

* See note 45.

† See note 58.

X. If it be granted that this is the nature of our elections, there is no doubt but all our actions are really and truly necessary. For as to the proper actions of the will, to will or suspend the act of volition, the men whom we are speaking of, give up liberty with respect to these, while they assert that it does not belong to

If this be so, all our actions are absolutely necessary.

NOTES.

immediate consequence of volition, on which account several authors have confounded them together; but though they be properly both acts of the mind, yet they are certainly distinct ones; the *will* is an ability of choosing some particular thoughts or motions, *agency* is a power of producing these thoughts or motions pursuant to the act of choice, or of putting that choice in execution. A careful distinction between these will help us to judge of all such authors as have either used them promiscuously, or been content to treat of the last only, as most of those persons have that are cited in the 14th and following pages of the *Philosophical Enquiry*.

These two last then being the only *active powers*, are the only proper subjects of liberty: to which again it is variously applied. With regard to the *will*, some content themselves with asserting its freedom from external *compulsion* only, from being forced contrary to its own bent and inclination. And, indeed, it would be very strange to suppose it otherwise: For to say that it may be drawn a contrary way to that which the mind prefers and directs, is to say, that it may tend two contrary ways at once, that a man may will a thing against his will, or be obliged to will what at the same time he does not will: but then such a freedom as this equally belongs to the two former powers, which cannot be forced to perceive or judge otherwise than they do perceive or judge; otherwise than as objects appear, and their own natures require; it may be applied to any thing the most necessary, nay, the more necessary the better. Others, therefore, have contended for an absolute exemption of the will from all imperceptible bias or physical inclination, from all internal necessity, arising either from its own frame and constitution, the impulse of other beings, or the operation of objects, reasons, motives, &c. which appeared to them the very essence of human liberty, the sole foundation of morality. And, indeed, these seem to be the only persons that speak out, and to the point, as shall be shewn in the following notes.

Lastly, A great many will confine their idea of liberty to *action* only, and define it to be a power of either taking up or laying down a thought, of beginning motion, or stopping it, ac-

to them. For they are of opinion, that when any thing is proposed by the understanding to be done, we either will it, or suspend the act of

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cording to the preference of the mind or will. But if this be all the liberty we have, it is of small consequence, since we are conscious that in *fact* all such actions, supposing the organs to be rightly disposed, follow the determination of the will; and also, that in *reason* they are no farther *moral*, nor we accountable for them than as they do so; we must, therefore, go up higher than this before we come at any valuable liberty; and the main question will be, Whether man is free to think or resolve upon, to will or choose any thing proposed, as well as to exert his other faculties in consequence of such resolution, will, or choice. This is the only point worth disputing, and wherein all *moral* liberty must consist; and, indeed, if it be not here it is no where. For if the mind be absolutely determined to choose in a certain manner in any given circumstances, its other subordinate faculties will immediately operate, and the several actions which depend thereon all follow by necessary consequence. Nay, upon this hypothesis there is properly no such thing as choice or action in man; but all are passions propagated in a chain of necessary causes and effects. And, indeed, all who suppose any external determination of the will (meaning always a necessary and irresistible one) whether they place it in the *desire of good, anxiety* for the absence of it, or the *last determination of the judgment*, are involved in the same consequence, how many steps soever they may take to remove the difficulty. For it is equal to me, if what I call my choice or action be necessary, where ever that necessity be placed. It is the same thing whether I be acted upon and over-ruled by one immediate cause, or drawn on by several successively. Suppose, v. g. that I am necessitated to obey the last result of my own *judgment*. From the *existence of things* follow certain *appearances*, those *appearances* cause certain *perceptions*, these *perceptions* form a *judgment*, this *judgment* determines the *will*, and this *will* produces *action*. All this is fixed and inevitable, every link of the chain is equally necessary, and it is all one to me on which my determinations hang: It is as good to take them from the first as last, from the existence of outward objects as from my own will; since the supposed choice or action is in reality as much out of my power, or as incapable of being altered or prevented by me, as the existence of external things. It is easy to observe how destructive this and the like schemes must prove, as well of morality as liberty, both which must stand and fall together, and can, I think, only be secured effectually upon the principles laid down by our author; of which in their proper place.

See also Chubb's *Reflections on Natural Liberty*. *Collection of Tracts*, p. 379, &c. or notes 45, 48, 58.

of volition concerning it, according to the prospect of happiness or importunity of the uneasiness which appears to the mind, in the present state and circumstances; by these, therefore, our election, according to them, is determined.

XI. But when the election is made, if we can effect what we will, then they say, we are free in respect of such actions, not from necessity, but only from compulsion; for it is plain that nothing but our will is wanting to the exertion of them, and supposing us to will them, they necessarily follow. For instance, when nothing hinders a man from walking but his own will, supposing this volition, it cannot be conceived but that he must walk, nor can he rest while this continues. If, therefore, according to them, all acts of the will are necessary (as being determined from without, viz. by the convenience or inconvenience of things or circumstances) the actions of the inferior faculties will be no less necessary, for they will depend on the same circumstances and acts of the will, which, as they are necessary, these actions will be necessary also. (43.) Though, according to them, therefore, there be no *compulsion* of the will, yet there is *necessity*, from which necessity nothing in the world will be free; nay, a great many of them openly profess to believe that this is the case.

That human actions are free, not from necessity, but compulsion.

XII. Now

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(43.) To call an action *necessary*, is properly speaking to affirm, that it is no action. For by the word *action*, we mean an immediate effect of what is metaphorically stiled a *self-moving power*: or the exercise of an ability which a being has to begin or determine a particular train of *thought* or *motion*. Now the idea of this power in any being, and of such exercise of it, is directly repugnant to that of *necessity*, which supposes the *thought* or

According to their opinion there is no contingency in things, nor could any thing be done otherwise than it is.

XII. Now, from this hypothesis, which they extend to the divine as well as human will, the following corollaries seem deducible. First, that nothing in nature could be done otherwise than it is. For, the whole series of things being as it were connected together by fate, there is no room for chance or liberty, properly so called: Contingency then is removed out of nature.

XIII. Secondly,

or motion to be already begun or determined, and to be obtruded on this being by something else, and consequently implies a negation of any such self-moving power in this being, or of its exercise by this being in the cases abovementioned. 'To be an agent (says Dr. Clarke*),' signifies to have a power of beginning motion, and motion cannot begin necessarily, because necessity of motion supposes an efficiency superior to, and irresistible by the thing moved, and consequently the beginning of motion cannot be in that which is moved necessarily, but in the superior cause, or in the efficiency of some other cause still superior to that, till at length we arrive at some Free Agent.' Where, though the doctor's definition of agency seems to be imperfect, that word generally including the power of beginning reflex thought as well as motion (which are two distinct species of action, and proceed from different powers, though they be often confounded together and comprehended under the same general term) yet it shews us an evident contradiction in these two words necessary agent, in either sense: Unless he uses the word agent in both senses together, and then his reasoning will be false, since what is acted on and determined by another in regard to its will, or thought, and in that sense moved by a superior efficiency, may yet have a power of beginning real corporeal motion (which is a quite different sort of action) in consequence of such pre-determined will, or thought, and in that sense be an agent, though not a moral one. But whatever the doctor might mean by the word agent, his argument will hold in either of these two senses separate, viz. that nothing can be said to act either in thinking or moving, which does not properly begin the train of thought or motion, but is put into thought or motion by something else; and also, that every thing cannot be so put into either thought or motion; and, therefore, that there must be some first cause of both.

And will not the same argument by the bye hold equally for some first cause of existence? If the doctor can suppose a first cause of all thought and motion (as he does here, and we think very reasonably) why may he not also suppose a first cause of all existence

* Remarks on the Philosophical Enquiry, p. 6.

XIII. Secondly, That nothing more can be understood by wicked or wrong-made elections, than that they are prejudicial to the elector or some others; which sense is very remote from the vulgar one; for in that evil elections are blamed, not for being hurtful, but for being hurtful without necessity, and because they are made otherwise than they ought to have been: In this hypothesis then there is no election made amiss. (44.) Nor can any thing be said to be done otherwise than it ought to be: for what could not possibly be done otherwise, is certainly done as it ought; since it is done according to the exigence and necessary order of things.

XIV. Thirdly, By the same principle all evil would be in the strictest sense *natural*, for it would derive its origin from natural and necessary *villanies* are to be placed to the account of human

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existence; and so entirely exclude that *antecedent necessity* which he has often recourse to as a kind of support of the existence of the first cause, but is obliged to exclude from its will and actions? Is it harder to conceive how an eternal independent being, or first cause, may *exist* without any antecedent necessity, than how it can *will* or *act* without any?

But to return to the chief design of this note. We see how necessary it is to fix the precise meaning of the word *action* in a controversy of this kind, and if the signification of it as laid down above be allowed, then necessary action is the same as passive action, or beginning a thing and not beginning it at the same time, and in the same respect; in which terms every one perceives it to be a contradiction.

(44.) *Leibnitz* declares it to be his settled opinion,† ‘That whenever we resolve or will contrary to an evident reason, we are carried by some other reason stronger in appearance.’ If this be always the case, we certainly can never will amiss or unreasonably, since that reason which appears at the time to be the strongest must and ought always to determine us.

† *Remarques sur le livre de l'origine du mal.* p. 483.

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fary caufes. The diftinction then would be loft between natural and moral evil, as commonly underftood. There would be no moral evil at all. For that only is reckoned moral by the common confent of mankind, of which the man himfelf is properly the caufe: but no body looks upon himfelf as properly the caufe of a thing which he could not avoid, or to which he was neceffitated by natural caufes, and fuch as were antecedent to the will. For every one blames himfelf only on this account, becaufe he was of himfelf unneceffarily the caufe of evil to himfelf or others. Thofe inconveniences which come by neceffity, he looks upon as miferies, as misfortunes, but never as a crime. Thefts, therefore, adulteries, perjuries, nay, the hatred of God himfelf, and whatever we efteem bafe in villanies (as well as the difgrace and punifhment attending them) muft be placed to the account of human mifery and unhappinefs, but by no means reckoned criminal, nor any more repugnant to the will of God, to his juftice, purity or goodnefs, than heat or cold.

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from evil.

XV. Fourthly, When, therefore, we blame a thief, adulterer, murderer, or perjured perfon, when thofe crimes are arraigned as fcandalous; this is not done becaufe they have deferved it, or becaufe thefe things are in themfelves really shameful or culpable; but becaufe that infamy may be a means of deterring the guilty perfons or others from the like elections. And this is the only reafon why we reproach a thief, &c. and not a fick perfon, with infamy; becaufe reproach may cure a thief, &c. but can do no good to a fick perfon.

XVI. Fifthly,

XVI. Fifthly, Malefactors are punished not because they deserve punishment, but because it is expedient, and laws are used to restrain vices, as physic to remove diseases; men sin, therefore, after the same manner as they die, *viz.* because an effectual remedy was not applied. And yet laws are not entirely useless, since they prevent some vices, as medicines protract the deaths of some diseased persons: and a person infected with the plague may be as justly cut off by the law, as a witch, when by that means there is hope of avoiding the contagion. (*)

Punishments are applied as medicines to the sick; neither are laws useless, since they prevent vice.

XVII. Sixthly, We are obliged to repay good offices, since by being thankful we may excite the benefactor to continue or increase his benevolence, and also induce others to do us service. And hence it comes to pass, that we are obliged to be grateful towards God and men, but not to the sun or a horse, because God and men may be excited by thanks to some farther beneficence, whereas the sun or a horse cannot. Thus no regard is to be had to a benefit received, but only to one that may be received; nor are we obliged to be grateful to the most generous benefactor for what is past, but only for the prospect of what is to come. All sense of gratitude then, as commonly understood, is destroyed; for the vulgar reckon him a cunning, not a grateful person, who returns one favour merely out of hopes of another,

We are obliged to be grateful only in prospect of a future benefit.

XVIII. Seventhly,

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(*) All this, and a great deal more to the same purpose, is expressly asserted (as indeed it is a necessary consequence of their hy-

According to this opinion, human happiness is impossible, since it depends upon things which are not in our power.

XVIII. Seventhly, If this opinion be true, we must despair of human felicity, which will not in the least be in our own Power, but entirely depend upon external objects. Our happiness (if there be any) must, according to them, be conceived to arise from the perfect enjoyment of those things which are agreeable to the appetites. Where the contrary to these are present, or the agreeable ones absent, we must necessarily be uneasy, and while we struggle with anxieties, we cannot be happy. According to this hypothesis therefore it follows, that our happiness necessarily requires such an enjoyment as we have spoken of, and that this is at the same time impossible. For who can hope that all external things (with which he has to do) should be so tempered as in every respect to answer his wishes, so as never to want what he desires, or to be forced to endure any thing contrary to his natural appetites? If happiness arises from the enjoyment of those things which are agreeable to the faculties and appetites, and which can move desire by their innate, or, at least, apparent goodness; if also the will is necessarily determined to these, according the judgment of the understanding, or importunity of appetites, every man must necessarily want a great many things which he has chosen, and bear a great many which he would not, than which nothing is more inconsistent with felicity. For we cannot possibly conceive any state of life wherein all

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Hypothesis) by *Hobbs* * and by the author of the *Philosophical Enquiry*, † and much the same by *Bayle*. ‡ The bare recital of such principles is a sufficient refutation of them.

* See his *Treatise on Human Liberty*, or *Bp. Bramhall's Works*, p. 678. † *Collins* P, 91, &c. ‡ *Crit. Dict.* p. 2609, &c.

all things answer to the natural appetites. In vain then do we hope for happiness, if it depend upon external objects. (K.)

XIX. This

N O T E S.

(K.) Against the argument here urged 'tis objected that it is lame in all its feet; *1st*, there is no consequence in it. *2dly*, the conclusion may be granted; and *3dly*, the argument may be resorted against the author.

To begin with the last; It is alledged that men are never the happier, or more independent of the accidents of fortune, by having a *power to choose without reason*.

To which I reply, that the author has no occasion to assert any such power; all that he pleads for, is that the will ought not to be determined by the judgment of the understanding concerning things antecedently agreeable or disagreeable to our natural appetites, because all the good of man does not lie in them; If it did, there would be no need of a will at all, but we ought to be absolutely determined by them. But the will is a faculty that by choosing a thing can make it agreeable, though it had no agreement with any natural appetite, nay, were contrary to them all; and for the will to choose a thing in order to please itself in the choice, is no more to choose without reason, than to build a house in order to preserve one from the inclemency of the weather, is to act without reason.

But *adly*, 'Tis asked, will men be any happier, or less dependent on the accidents of fortune by having such a faculty? Yes, sure a great deal; for no accident of fortune can take this liberty from them, or hinder their being pleased with their choice; and in the midst of sickness, pain and torment, if they have this faculty, they will find pleasure and satisfaction in it, and make the most adverse fortune easy to them; (as we see wise men frequently do) at least, more easy than such circumstances would be without it.

3dly, 'Tis objected, that it must be impossible to give agreeableness to a thing which has none antecedently to the will. For to do so we must have a power either to change our taste of things, or the things themselves; but that would almost be the same as to say to a piece of lead be thou gold, or to a flint be thou a diamond, or at least produce the same effect on me. To which the answer is easy; Good is not an *absolute* thing, but *relative*, and consists in the agreeableness of one thing to another, as suppose between the appetite and object; if then these be disagreeable to one another, the one is evil to the other, and to make them agreeable, one of them must of necessity be changed, and the change of either will cause it. Although therefore I cannot change lead into gold, by any act of my free-will, yet I can condemn gold as much as if it were

Its consequences hard, and tho' the argument from consequences be generally a bad one, yet these bring some prejudice against an opinion which seems attended with them, especially if they be acknowledged.

XIX. This, and a great deal more that might be added, must seem hard and repugnant to the common notions of men, and cannot be believed without extraordinary prejudice to mankind. I confess, indeed, that, for the most part, one cannot argue well against an opinion

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were lead, and be as well content with a leaden cup as if it were gold. Thousands make this use of free-will, and arise to this pitch of happiness by the help of it: It is an old rule *Si res haberi non potest, deme aliquid de cupiditatibus*. If you can't have wealth or honour resolve, that is, *choose* to be satisfied without it, and experience will teach you that such a choice is much to your ease and happiness. To say that this is impossible, is to give the lie to all who treat of morals and divinity: Of so great moment is such a power of making things good by choice, that in truth all moral advices suppose us to have it, or else they are not sense.

But 4thly, 'Tis objected, That if the will can make a thing agreeable by choosing, such a power would be *infinite*, and might make a man happy in all circumstances, even in *Hell*. For if it can give six degrees of pleasure to an object, it may as well give infinite; since it is without reason that it gives these six. I answer, all created powers and pleasures are limited, and no subject is capable of more than such a certain degree, therefore there is likewise a limitation of the pleasure arising from the use of free-will, as well as from the use of seeing or hearing, or any other faculty or appetite; and as the will is an appetite; so the pleasure of it bears some proportion to the pleasure arising from the satisfaction of other appetites; but in what degree we cannot precisely determine, any more than we can settle the proportion between the pleasures of seeing and hearing; which yet we know are neither of them infinite. Though therefore we cannot precisely determine the proportion, yet we are certain that we frequently cross all our natural appetites to maintain our choice, and by means of it bear up against the strokes of adverse fortune, and a flood of natural evils.

But 5thly, 'Tis objected, that if we had this power of making things agreeable or disagreeable by choice, we need not trouble ourselves how our other appetites were satisfied, for we might be absolutely happy in spite of all the accidents of fortune.

He that objects this, assuredly did not consider the description given by the author of this faculty, or that the having it doth not destroy our other appetites; and that when it chooses things contrary to them, it necessarily creates a great deal of pain, uneasiness and torment; which abates *so far* the pleasure we take in our elections,

nion from its consequences, since a great many things are true which have consequences hard enough: not to mention how easily we mistake in deducing consequences. But yet when

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elections, that the pleasure we obtain by such a choice is little or nothing in respect of what it might be if we did not choose amiss. These things are so plainly and frequently repeated in the book, that it seems strange how any one could imagine that because we have a faculty to please ourselves by choosing, that therefore we may be absolutely happy in spite of all the accidents of fortune.

If by happiness be meant a state more eligible than nothing, I believe by means of this faculty we may generally speaking be so far happy, and that is sufficient to justify God's putting us into our present circumstances. But if by happiness be meant, as it ought to be, a state wherein we have a full and free exteior of all our faculties, then in as much as our power of choosing is but one faculty, though superior to all the rest, the exercise of it alone can never make us absolutely and compleatly happy, though it may in such a degree as is very desirable.

6thly, The conclusion of the argument is granted, and it is looked on as no inconvenience that our happiness should in some cases depend on things without us, and not in our own power. But the conclusion is quite another thing. The words are, *If this opinion be true, we must despair of human happiness, for it will not be in the least in our own power, but entirely depend upon external objects.*

The accidents of fortune, such as an earthquake, may sink a man and all his concerns, and though in that extraordinary case, as it is put, my choice be not able to prevent my death, yet my happiness in the general management of life may be very much in my own power, and not altogether in the power of foreign accidents. And even in the case proposed, a good man that had fixed his election to submit to all such circumstances as it should please Providence to assign him, would not be without some pleasure, even under the thoughts of such an accident: at least not so unhappy as another that had made no such resolution or election. But if such an election can make him no easier, nor do him any good, it were to no purpose to make it. He can have no prospect or design in making it, if the good or evil resulting from the agreement or disagreement of what happens to his natural appetites be the only considerations that can determine his will. It is plain that in such a case he must be miserable, if outward things happen cross to his appetites; whereas if he can make them agreeable or disagreeable in any measure by his own choice, he is still master of his happiness to a certain degree; and the consideration that he can make them so is a good reason for choosing. So far is he from choosing *without reason*, as is falsely objected.

But

when these are acknowledged by the authors themselves ; and, if believed, would prove detrimental to morality, they bring no small prejudice against an opinion which is attended with them, and recommend us to some other as more probable, though it be not supported by any stronger reasons.

All those who declare that the will is passive in its operations must be of the same opinion with the former, and pressed by the same consequences.

XX. It is to be observed also, that among the foregoing authors I reckon those who declare that the will is determined by the last judgment of

N O T E S.

But 7thly, It is urged, that if the will were never moved but by the representation of antecedent good and evil in the things that happen, it would not indeed be in our power to be happy, supposing there were no God; and that all things were governed by matter and motion : but God has so ordered it, that to be virtuous generally is sufficient to make a man happy. If therefore the soul follows reason and the orders God has given her, she is sure to be happy, although she cannot find matter enough to make her so in this life.

To which I answer, 1st, That this is giving up the happiness of this life, and acknowledging that God has not provided any natural means to make us happy here, which is a confession that one who is zealous to defend the wisdom and goodness of God will not easily grant.

2dly, I have no other notion of *virtue* than that of an election within the limits prescribed by God and nature ; I think the definition of it is *habitus cum ratione electivus in mediocritate consistens* ; if then to be virtuous is enough to make us happy, it is plain that our happiness consists in our *election*, which is the very thing I plead for : but if our election make the things elected neither better nor worse, neither more nor less agreeable, it is inconceivable how our happiness should consist at all in virtue. If the meaning be that God will reward us hereafter : that is to confess we are miserable for the present, but shall be happy at some other time. I own indeed that *hope* is a great cause of pleasure ; but except we choose the crossing our natural appetites for the present out of prospect to the future, it will no ways render our present suffering tolerable. Nor will such a prospect, how clearly soever offered by our understanding, yield us this pleasure, except the will consent. For then it would do so to all to whom the offer is made ; whereas we see one perseveres by means of it, and another in much more advantageous circumstances yields to the present temptation, and knowingly loses the reward.

of the understanding,* which has taken with a great many philosophers; and in short, all who maintain that the will is *passive* in elections. For these must be esteemed to have the same sentiments of liberty with the former, which way soever they explain it; as may appear from hence, that most of them expressly deny that *indifference* belongs to the nature of freedom; so that their opinion is attended with the same consequences as the former (45.)

N O T E S.

(45.) As Mr. *Locke* has particularly laboured the point before us, and may seem to defend by turns the several principles which our author attacks here and in the following section, we shall examine a little into his method of treating the subject. Having first of all defined liberty to be 'a power in any agent to do or forbear any particular action, according to the determination or thought of the mind, whereby either of them is preferred to the other.' † He takes a great deal of pains to prove that such liberty does not belong to the will: which is very certain, granting his sense of liberty to be the only one, since by his definition it is evidently subsequent to the choice or preference of the mind, and only relates to the execution of such choice by an inferior faculty. ‡ But then, besides this idea of liberty, which is nothing to the present question, there is another previous and equally proper one, which regards the very determination, preference or direction of the mind itself; and may be called its power of *determining* to do or forbear any particular action, or of *preferring* one to another; and if freedom can with any propriety of speech be attributed to one of these powers || as he has constantly attributed it, why may it not with equal propriety be applied to the other? he proceeds therefore to state the question concerning the latter, which question he would not have to be, whether the will is free; but whether the mind or man is free to will; both which I think amount to the same thing with common understandings, since in the first case we only ask, whether this will be properly an *active* power of the mind (*i. e.* as opposed to Mr. *Locke's* *passive* power) and in the second, whether the mind be *active* or *indifferent* in exerting this power called will? and both which will be equally improper questions with regard to his former sense of the word *free*, *i. e.* as only applicable to the actions subsequent on volition. However, he goes on in the second place to enquire, whether in general a man be free 'to will or not to will, when any action is once proposed to his thoughts, as presently to be done.' In which respect he determines

* *Against this notion, see sect. 5. Subsect. 2. par. 13.*

† *C. Of Power, § 2.*

‡ See note 42.

|| 16.

SUBSECT. II.

An Opinion is proposed in general, asserting a Freedom from Necessity as well as Compulsion.

This agrees with the former in most cases, especially in those relating to the appetites, to good, pleasant, profitable and honest; but makes this to be the difference between a man and brute, *viz.* that the one is determined by its bodily appetite, the other by himself.

THIS opinion determines almost the same with the former concerning the goodness or agreeableness of objects to the appetites, nor is there much difference in what relates to the distinction

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determines that a man is not at liberty, because he cannot forbear willing or preferring the one to the other: || which though it be scarce consistent with his other notion of *suspension*, whereby a man either avoids a particular determination in the case, and continues in the same state he is in [not by virtue of a present determination of his will, but of some precedent one] or else wills something different from either the existence or non-existence of the action proposed *, and though it should comprehend, as he says it does, most cases in life, yet still it is not of the least importance. For what does it signify to me that I must necessarily take one side or the other, right or wrong, so long as I can choose either of them indifferently? If I can will or choose either of the two, here is full room for the exercise of liberty; and whether I can or no, ought to have been Mr. Locke's next question. The answer to which seems pretty easy, though perhaps not so reconcilable with his hypothesis. However, instead of meddling with it, he slips this absurd query into its room, *viz.* Whether a man be at liberty to will which of the two he pleases? or which is the same, whether he can will what he wills? sect. 25.† And then, instead of shewing whether the will be naturally determined to one side, in any or all cases, or whether the man be always free to will this way or that; (as might have been expected) he tells us something very different, *viz.* that we cannot always act in that manner, or that liberty of acting does not require that a man should be able to do any action or its contrary: then he goes on to give us another explanation of the word liberty, which is still confined to action, and consequently foreign to the present question.

In the next place he defines the will over again.‡ ‘Which (says he) is nothing but a power in the mind to direct the operative faculties of a man to motion or rest, as far as they depend

on

|| § 23, 24.

* See note 48.

† See Strutt's remarks on Locke's Chapter of Power, p. 38. &c.

‡ Sect. 29.

distinction of good into pleasant, profitable, and honest : except that it refers honest to the duty which a man owes to God, himself, and other men, as a member of an intelligent society, rather

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* on such direction.* By which words if he mean, that this power of directing the operative faculties, is properly active (in the sense abovementioned) or physically indifferent to any particular manner of directing them, *i. e.* is an ability to direct them either to motion or rest, without any natural bias to determine it (or to determine the mind to determine it) toward one side always rather than the other : If, I say, he intends to imply thus much in this definition of will, then may freedom be justly predicated of that same will (or of the mind in the exercise of it) not indeed his kind of freedom, *i. e.* that of acting, which belongs to another faculty ; but freedom in our sense of the word, *i. e.* a certain indifference, or indeterminateness in its own exercise ; which is what most men understand by *liberum arbitrium* ; and whether there be such a liberty as this in human nature, would here have been a proper question. For if there be, then we have got an absolutely self-moving principle, which does not want any thing out of itself to determine it ; which has no physical connection with, and of consequence, no necessary occasion for that grand determiner *anxiety*, which he has afterwards taken so much pains to settle and explain ; and which shall be considered by and by. But here he flies off again, and instead of determining this, which is the main point of the controversy, and wherein liberty must be found or no where [as we observed in note 41.] I say, instead of stating and determining this great question, whether the will or mind be absolutely independent upon, and physically indifferent to all particular acts, objects, motions, &c. or necessarily require some foreign mover ; he seems to take the latter for granted, and immediately proceeds to the following question, *What determines the will ?* The meaning of which, says he *, is this, ‘ what moves the mind in every particular instance to determine its general power of directing to this or that particular motion or rest ?’ this Mr. *Locke* calls, for shortness sake, *determining the will* ; and declares that what thus determines it either first to continue in the same state or action, is only the present satisfaction in it : or secondly to change, is always some uneasiness †. By which words if he only meant that these preceptions are the common motives, inducements, or occasions whereupon the mind in fact exerts its power of willing in this or that particular manner ; though in reality it always can, and often does the contrary, as he seems to intimate by speaking of a will contrary to desire ‡ of raising desires by due consideration ¶ and

* Sect. 19.

† Ibid.

‡ Sect. 30.

¶ Sect. 46.

ther than to the natural appetites ; and thinks that we are to judge of the agreeableness of things from that, rather than from these. As to the election which the will makes on account of these,

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and forming appetites †, of a power to suspend any desires, to moderate and restrain the passions, and hinder either of them from determining the will and engaging us in action : ¶ then, as we said before, he is only treating of another question, and what he has advanced on this head may readily be granted, at least without any prejudice to human liberty. For in this sense to affirm that the will or mind is determined by something without it, is only saying that it generally has some motives from without, according to which it usually determines the abovementioned powers, which no man in his senses can dispute.

But if he intended that these motives should be understood to rule and direct the will absolutely and irresistibly : — That they have such a necessary influence on the mind, that it can never be determined either without or against them ; — in short, that the man has not a *physical power* of willing independent of, and consequently indifferent to all assignable reasons and motives whatsoever ; — which the general drift of his discourse seems to assert, particularly § 47, 48, 49, 50. where he confounds the determination of the judgment with the exertion of the self-moving power throughout ; as also § 52. where he asserts, that all the liberty we have, or are capable of, lies in this, ‘ that we can suspend our desires, and hold our wills undetermined, till we have examined the good and evil of what we desire ; what follows after that follows in a chain of consequences linked one to another, all depending on the last determination of the judgment.’ And when he speaks of causes not in our power, operating for the most part *forcibly* on the will, § 57, &c. If from these and the like expressions, I say, we may conclude this to have been his opinion, *viz.* that all the liberty of the mind consists solely in directing the determination of the judgment, (though if the mind be always determined from without, we must have a motive also for this direction, and consequently shall find no more freedom here than any where else) after which determination all our actions, if they can be called such *) follow necessarily : then I believe it will appear, that at the same time that he opposed the true notion of free-will, he contradicted common sense and experience, as well as himself.

For in the first place, is it not self-evident, that we often do not follow our own present judgment, but run counter to the clear conviction of our understandings ; which actions accordingly appear vicious, and fill us immediately with regret and the stings of conscience ?

† Sect. 53.

¶ Sect. 47, 50, 53.

* See note 42.

these, it asserts that this proceeds from the will itself, and that a free agent cannot be determined like natural bodies by external impulses, or like brutes by objects. For this is the very difference

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conscience? this he allows, [§ 35, 38.] to make room for his *anxiety*. But, upon the foregoing hypothesis, how can any action appear to be irregular? how can any thing that is consequent upon the final result of judgment, (if this word be used in its proper sense) be against conscience, which is nothing else but that final judgment? * Nay; upon the supposition of our being inviolably determined in willing by a previous judgment (and, according to Mr. Locke, our constitution puts us under a necessity of being so, § 48.) it would be really impossible for us to will amiss or immorally, let our judgments be ever so erroneous; 'the causes of which (as he also observes, § 64.) proceed from the weak and narrow constitution of our minds, and are most of them out of our power.' Either therefore we can will without and against a present judgment, and therefore are not necessarily (*i. e.* physically) determined by it; or we cannot be guilty of a wrong volition: whatever proves the one, by necessary consequence establishes the other. Farther, there are innumerable indifferent actions which occur daily, both with respect to absolute choosing or refusing, or to choosing among things absolutely equal; equal both in themselves, and to the mind, on which we evidently pass no manner of judgment, and consequently cannot be said to follow its determination in them. To will the eating or not eating of an egg is a proof of the former; to choose one out of two or more eggs apparently alike, is a proverbial instance of the latter; both which are demonstrations of an active or self-moving power; either way we determine and act when the motives are entirely equal, which is the same as to act without any motive at all. In the former case I perceive no previous inclination to direct my will in general, in the latter no motive to influence its determination in particular; and in the present case, not to perceive a motive is to have none; (except we could be said to have an idea without being conscious of it, to be anxious and yet insensible of that anxiety, or swayed by a reason which we do not at all apprehend.) Neither is it necessary to a true equality of indifference here, that I be supposed to have no will to use *any eggs at all* (as the author of the *Philosophical Enquiry* absurdly puts the case.) For granting in the first place, that I have not a will to use any eggs at all, it is indeed nonsense to suppose afterwards that I should choose any one; but let

* See Limborch. *Theol. Christ.* L. 2. C. 23. Sect. 16. and for an answer to the latter part of Locke's 48th Sect. see the same Chap. Sect. the last.

ference betwixt man and the brutes, that these are determined according to their bodily appetites, whence all their actions are necessary, but man has a different principle in him, and determines himself to action.

II. This

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let me have never so great an inclination to eat eggs in general, yet that general inclination will not in the least oblige me to choose or prefer one egg in particular *, which is the only point in question. Numberless instances might easily be given †, where we often approve, prefer, desire and choose; and all we know not why: where we either choose such things as have no manner of good or evil in them, excepting what arises purely from that choice; or prefer some to others, when both are equal means to the same end: in which cases our judgment is not in the least concerned; and he that undertakes to oppose the principle by which our author accounts for them, must either deny all such equality and indifference, or grant the question. Not that this principle is confined to such cases as these; nor are they produced as the most important, but as the most *evident* instances of its exertion; where no motives can be supposed to determine the will, because there are none. To urge, that such elections as these are made on purpose to try my liberty, which end, say some becomes the motive; is in effect granting the very thing we contend for, *viz.* that the pleasure attending the exercise of the will is often the sole reason of volition. Besides, that motive is one of the mind's own making; and to be able to create or produce the motive for action, is the same thing, with regard to liberty, as to be able to act without one. If by trying our liberty be meant an experiment to assure us that we have really such a power; there can be no reason for trying it in this sense, because we are sufficiently conscious of it before any such trial.

* The mind (says the author of the *Essay on Consciousness* p. 208.) before ever it exerts its will or power of choosing, is conscious, and knows within itself, that it hath a power of choice or preference; and this is a necessary condition of willing at all, inasmuch that the very first time I had occasion to exert my will, or make use of my elective power, I could not possibly exercise it, or do any voluntary act, without knowing and being conscious to myself [before hand] that I have such a faculty or power in myself. A thing that seems at first sight very strange and wonderful; to know I have a power of acting before ever I have acted, or had any trial or experience of it: but a little reflection will quickly satisfy any one that in the nature of the thing it must

* See Leibnitz's *fifth paper to Dr. Clarke*, N°. 17, and 66.

† See Dr. Cheyne's *Phil. Principles*, Chap. 2. Sect. 13.

II. This principle whereby man excels the brutes is thus explained by the defenders of the following opinion, if I take their meaning right: in the first place, they declare that there is some *chief good*, the enjoyment of which would make a man compleatly happy; this he naturally and necessarily desires, and cannot reject it when duly represented by the understanding. That other things which offer themselves have a relation to this good, or some connection with it, and are to be esteemed good or evil, as they help or hinder our obtaining it; and since there is nothing in nature but what in some respect or other, either promotes this end, or prevents it; from this indifference they declare, that we have an opportunity of rejecting or receiving any thing. For

That the chief good is necessarily desir'd but others are not, because they may be represented by the understanding in different respects.

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* must be so, and cannot possibly be otherwise; and which is peculiar to this faculty: for we know nothing of our powers of perceiving, understanding, remembering, &c. but by experimenting their acts, it being necessary first to perceive or think, before we can know that we have a power of perceiving or thinking.* The author proceeds to shew, that this *foreconscience* of a power of *willing* or choosing, does most clearly demonstrate that the mind in all its volition *begins* the motion, or acteth *from itself*.*

To argue still that some *minute* imperceptible causes, some particular circumstances in our own bodies, or those about us, must determine even these seemingly indifferent actions, is either running into the former absurdity of making us act upon motives which we do not apprehend; or saying, that we act mechanically, i. e. do not act at all; and in the last place, to say that we are determined to choose any of these trifles just as we *happen* to fix our thoughts upon it in particular, at the very instant of action, is either attributing all to the self-moving power of the mind, which is granting the question; or referring us to the minute and imperceptible causes abovementioned; or obtruding upon us that idle, unmeaning word *chance* instead of a physical cause, which is saying nothing at all. How hard must men be pressed under an hypothesis, when they fly to such evasive shifts as these! how much

easier

For though we can choose nothing but under the appearance of good, *i. e.* unless it be in some manner connected with the chief good, as a means or appendage; yet this does not determine the choice, because every object may be varied, and represented by the understanding under very different appearances.

Though therefore the will follows some judgment of the understanding, yet it is not necessarily determined by it.

III. Secondly, When therefore any good is proposed which is not the chief, the will can *suspend* † the action, and command the understanding to propose some other thing, or the same in some different view: which may be always done, since every thing except the chief good is of such a nature, that the understanding may apprehend some respect or relation wherein it is incommodious. Notwithstanding therefore that the will always does follow some judgment of the understanding, which is made about the subsequent actions, yet it is not necessarily determined by any, for it can suspend its act, and order some other judgment, which it may follow. Since therefore it can either exert or suspend its act, it is not only free from compulsion, but also indifferent in itself, with regard to its actions, and determines itself without necessity.

IV. It

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easier and better would it be to give up all such blind, unknown, and unaccountable impulses, and own, what common sense and experience dictate, an independent, free, self-moving principle, the true, the obvious, and only source of both volition and action!

With regard to Mr. *Locke's* seeming inconsistencies, I shall only add one observation more, *viz.* that he appears to place the cause (motive, or whatever he means by it) of his determination ~~at~~ the will after the effect. The cause of that determination is, according to him, *anxiety*; this he sometimes makes concomitant, sometimes

† See note 48.

IV. It must be confess'd, that this opinion does establish liberty, and on that account is more agreeable to reason, experience, and the common sense of mankind, yet some things in it seem to be presumed upon and not sufficiently explained.

This opinion establishes liberty, but yet there are some things not sufficiently explained in it.

V. For

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sometimes consequent upon desire; and sect. 31. he says, the one is scarce distinguishable from the other.

But this same desire appears to be the very determination of the will itself; what we absolutely desire we always will, and *vice versa*; whether it be in our power to pursue that will, and produce it into act, or not: and indeed desire seems to be no otherwise distinguishable from volition, than as the latter is generally attended with the power of action, which the former is considered without. This, I think, is all the distinction that they are capable of, which yet is only nominal: nor do his instances in §. 30. prove that there is any difference between them. Thus when I am obliged to use persuasions with another, which I wish may not prevail upon him; or suffer one pain to prevent a greater: here are two opposite wills, or a weak imperfect volition conquered by, and giving way to a stronger: and we might as well say, desire is opposite desire, as to volition. I will, or desire, that this man may not be prevailed upon, but yet I will, or desire more powerfully and effectually to use these persuasions with him: or rather, here is but one actual desire or will in the case, and the other is only hypothetical. Thus I should will to be cured of the gout, if that cure would not throw me into greater pain: but in the present circumstances I do not really will it, nor exert any one act which may serve to remove it: nay, in this case, I will or desire to bear the gout rather than a worse evil that would attend the removal of it. His axiom therefore, that wherever there is pain, there is a desire to be rid of it, is not absolutely true.

Again, I should refuse a painful remedy or disagreeable potion, if I could enjoy perfect health without them: but as I manifestly cannot, I choose the less evil of the two. Nor can I indeed be properly said to choose or desire both in the present circumstances, or to will one and desire the contrary; since I know that only one of them is possible: which therefore I now certainly will or desire, though I should certainly have willed the contrary, had it been equally possible. These then, and the like instances are not sufficient to prove any opposition between will and desire; except the latter be only taken for a mere passive appetite; in which sense the words *choose*, *prefer*, &c. must be very improperly applied to it. But, in reality, I believe Mr. Locke here sets the word *desire* to signify what we commonly mean by the *will*, as he does in Sect. 48. where it is called the *power of preferring*:

Such a liberty as this seems to be of more prejudice than benefit to mankind.

V. For in the first place, 'tis said that the will *determines itself*, but we are not informed how that is possible, nor what use such a power would be of, were it admitted: nay, it seems rather prejudicial than advantageous to mankind. For that goodness which it is supposed to pursue, is in the things themselves, and arises from their connection with the chief good; it is not therefore to be formed, but discovered by the understanding. If then the understanding performs its duty right, it will discover what is best: but it is our advantage to be determined to that which is best: it had therefore been better for man, if nature had given him up absolutely to the determination of his own judgement and understanding,

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preferring: and puts volition into the place of *elbow*; as seems probable from his description of willing in the 16th, 28th, and 30th sections, as also, c. 23. sect. 18. where he defines the will to be a *power of putting body into motion by thought*. And the same notion, I think, runs through all his letters to *Limborch*.

Upon a review of this chapter of Mr. Locke's essay, and comparing the first edition of it with the rest, I find a remarkable passage omitted in all the following ones, which may serve to shew us upon what ground he at first supposed the will to be determined from *without*, and why upon altering part of his scheme, and leaving the rest, he was obliged to take that for granted, and let his former supposition stand without its reason. It begins at sect. 28. "We must remember that *volition* or *willing*, regarding only what is in our power, is nothing but *preferring* the doing of any thing to the not doing of it; action to rest, and *contra*. Well, but what is this preferring? It is nothing but the *being pleased with one thing more than another*. Is then a man indifferent to be pleased or not pleased more with one thing than another? Is it in his choice, whether he will or will not be better pleased with one thing than another? "And to this, I think, every one's experience is ready to make answer, No. From whence it follows, that the will or preference is determined by something without itself; let us see then what it is determined by. If willing be but the being better *pleased*, as has been shewn, it is easy to know what it is determines the will, what it is pleases best; every one knows it is *happiness*, or that which makes any part of hap-

"piness,

understanding, and not allowed that judgment to be suspended by the power of the will. For by that means he would have obtained his end with greater certainty and ease. I grant, that if a man were absolutely determined in his actions to the best, there would be no room for virtue, properly so called; for virtue, as it is commonly understood, requires a free Act, and this liberty is the very thing that is valuable in virtue; and with good reason, if a free choice be the very thing which pleases: (for thus it would be impossible to attain the end of choosing, *i. e.* to please ourselves, without liberty, since that very thing which pleases in action, *viz.* Liberty, would

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“ *pleases, or contributes to it, and that is it we call good.—*
 “ *Good then, the greater good, is that alone which determines*
 “ *the will!*”

From hence we may observe, that as he here makes the will a mere *passive affection* of the mind, a power of being *pleased* with some things more than others, (which definition will with equal propriety take in all the *senses* too) he was naturally led to enquire after the ground of these its different pleasures, which could only be the different natures of external objects acting differently upon it (as they do also on the senses) For what is only *acted* upon, must have something *without* itself to act upon it; and to be pleased in a different manner by the action of different objects, is only, in other words, to receive different degrees of *happiness* from them. Upon this scheme we must always be unavoidably determined by the greatest apparent good, or necessarily prefer what seems productive of the highest degree of happiness; which is indeed sufficiently intelligible, and he pursued it throughout consistently. But upon second thoughts, finding this not very reconcileable with matter of fact, (as he observed in sect. 33, 38, 43, 44, 59, &c. of the following editions, where he has fully shewn that we do not always prefer or choose the greater apparent good) and still supposing the will to be *passive* or determined from *without*, he alters his former hypothesis so far as to make the will be determined, not by the greater *good* immediately, but by that *uneasiness*, which is founded in the *desire*, arising from the prospect of some *good*. But it being likewise evident, that all things do not raise our desire in proportion to their apparent goodness; he endeavours to account for this, by saying, that

“ We

would be wanting.) But yet, if any thing which the understanding can discover, be the very best before or independent of our choice, it were proper for us to be necessarily determined to it; for the fruition of it, howsoever obtained, would make us happy, and be so much the more valuable, as it would be certain, and not depend upon chance, as all the actions of free-will are in a manner supposed to do: nor need we much regard the *glory* arising from a well-made choice; since the fruition of the greatest good would give us happiness without it; nay, such glory would be empty and despicable in competition with the greatest good. Hence it appears, that free-will, according to this hypothesis, cannot be reckoned any advantage.

VI. SE-

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“ We do not look on them to make a part of that happiness “ wherewith we in our present thoughts can satisfy ourselves, “ sect. 43.” *i. e.* we can be *content* without them; or, in our author’s language, they do not absolutely please us, because we do not *will* them. He proceeds therefore to mend his hypothesis farther, by making the mind in some sort *active* in *contemplating*, in embracing or rejecting any kinds of apparent good, by giving it a power of *raising*, improving, or *suspending* any of its *desires*, of governing and moderating the passions, and forming to itself an *appetite* or *relish* of things; sect. 45, and 53. All which is exactly agreeable to our author’s principles, as well as truth; and it is a wonder, one that so attentively considered the operations of the human mind, should not be led on to that other part of its liberty which is equally confirmed by experience, *viz.* of choosing arbitrarily among different kinds and degrees of pain; of over-ruling any ordinary desire of obtaining good, or avoiding evil; and by consequence of its will being properly *active* or *physically indifferent* with regard to either. But though he has inserted several passages in the subsequent editions, which come near to liberty, yet he takes in the greatest part of his passive scheme, and generally mixes both together. This has occasioned that confusion in the chapter abovementioned, which cannot but be observed by every reader.

Dr. Clarke’s argument for absolute freedom, because all motives or tentations are mere abstract notions, and have no physical
power,

VI. Secondly, If it be said, that the understanding is dubious in many cases, and ignorant of what is the best, and in these liberty takes place; neither does this clear the matter. For if the things to be done be good or evil in themselves, but unknown to the intellect, there is no help in the will; nor does its liberty assist us in discovering or obtaining the better side; if they be indifferent, it is no matter what we do, since the conveniencies and inconveniencies are equal on both sides. If then we admit of liberty in these cases, it will be of no use or importance to life or happiness; nay, it must be esteemed an imperfection, as deriving its origin from the imperfection of the understanding. For if the understanding could certainly determine what were the best to be done, there would be no room for liberty. (46.)

It only takes place in doubtful matters, and then 'tis of no use or importance.

VII. Third-

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power, ¶ seems not conclusive, or at least not clear. For who knows, say the Fatalists, how far reasons, motives, &c. may affect a spirit? Why may not one immaterial substance determine another by means of *thought*, as well as a material one can move another by means of *impulse*? Nay, his coadjutor Mr. Jackson grants, † “That abstract notions will by a forcible and irresistible impulse, “compel the mind to move the body whether it will or no.” Which impulse, if it were constant, would sufficiently acquit the maintainers of necessity. But that there can be no such forcible impulse, will, I hope, appear below, where it will be shewn to be both agreeable to reason, to suppose that there are active or self-moving beings, which, as such, must have a physical power of resisting what we call the most cogent motives: and to be confirmed by experience, that our own minds occasionally exert such a power; which is sufficient for our purpose. For an explanation of the true notion of liberty, see the following subsections of this chapter, and note 38.

(46.) These, with some of the following consequences attending such a confused hypothesis of liberty, are well urged by Mr. Locke (though they seem to return upon himself) in his chapter,

¶ *Remarks on the Philosophical Enquiry*, p. 10.

† *Defence of human liberty*, p. 198.

We are left in doubt concerning the way to happiness, and can have no help from liberty.

VII. Thirdly, these men are not well agreed what this *chief good* is, from the connection with which the understanding must judge of the goodness of other things, as may appear from their various and contradictory opinions about it. (47.) We must necessarily therefore be wavering and solicitous, and even rebel against nature itself, which has neither fixt a certain end, nor granted any certain means to attain it, but left us in anxiety and doubt about the way which leads to happiness; neither is there any help here in our liberty, since it is blind, and can do nothing towards bringing us back into the right way.

Since that is good which is agreeable, and this is to be judged of by the understanding, if the will follow this judgment, it is not free, if it does not, it acts against reason. We had better therefore be without such liberty.

VIII. Fourthly, it is confessed by all, that good in general is what is universally agreeable, and what

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chapter of power, sect. 48, 49, 50. and in the *Philosoph. Enquiry*, p. 63, &c. and appear to be unavoidable in any other scheme but that of our author; who supposes, that in most cases the goodness of an act or object entirely depends upon, and is produced merely by our choosing it; and of consequence liberty, or a power of choosing, is according to his principles, so far from being unnecessary, or an imperfection, that it is our noblest perfection, and constitutes the greatest part of our happiness; for an explanation of this, see sect. 2. of this chapter.

(47.) This uncertainty about the *summum bonum* is owned and well accounted for by Mr. Locke, B. 2. c. 28. sect. 55. "Hence it was that the philosophers of old did in vain enquire whether *summum bonum* consisted in riches or bodily delights, or virtue, or contemplation. And they might have as reasonably disputed whether the best relish were to be found in apples, plumbs, or nuts, and have divided themselves into sects upon it. For as pleasant tastes depend not on the things *themselves*, but their agreeableness to this or that particular *palate*, where in there is great variety; so the greatest happiness consists in the having those things which produce the greatest pleasure, and in the absence of those which cause any disturbance, any pain. Now these to different men are very different things." To the same purpose are the 3d and 4th observations in the *Religion of Nature delineated*, p. 33. which may serve to confirm the notion which our author proposes in the next subsection, *viz.* that most of the good or agreeableness in the things arises not from their own *natures*, but our *choice* of them; or that objects are not always chosen because they are good, but generally become good, because they are chosen.

what all desire. Every good therefore answers to some appetite, and according to these authors, objects are good on account of a natural and necessary suitableness which they have to our appetites. The understanding therefore does not make good, but finds it in the things themselves: and when it judges any thing in nature to be agreeable, that, according to them, must necessarily be in respect of some natural appetite. All the good then which is in the things will be the object of some faculty or appetite, *i. e.* of the understanding, sense, &c. But all these are determined by nature, in regard to the appetite or faculty to which they relate, *i. e.* in regard to their *pleasantness*, or agreeableness; and as to the relation which they bear to each other, *i. e.* as to their *profitableness* and *honesty*, they are to be judged of by the understanding, and directed when and in what manner they must give place to each other, or afford their mutual assistance.

Free-will then appears to be of no manner of use; for if it certainly follow the decree of reason, it is not free, at least from necessity, since that very reason which it follows is not free: if it does not necessarily follow that, we had better be without it, since it perverts every thing, and confounds the order of reason, which is best; such a liberty as this would therefore be prejudicial to mankind; it would make them liable to do amiss, and produce no kind of good to compensate for so great an evil.

IX. Fifthly, It is supposed that the judgment of the understanding concerning the goodness of any thing, is a condition without which the will is not directed to the object, but yet, that it can either exert or suspend its act about any good

If the will could suspend its act contrary to the judgment of the understanding, it would run directly into evil; it seems therefore necessary for it to act at the time and in the manner which the understanding directs.

good whatsoever. Let us suppose then that the understanding has determined it to be good to exert some certain action and evil to suspend it; while this judgment continues, if the will can suspend its act, it chooses evil; if it cannot, it is not free. You will say, it can command the understanding to change its judgment: be it so. But it is evident, that the man suspends his action before he can command the understanding to change its judgment, *i. e.* he suspends the action while the judgment determines that it is evil to suspend; and of consequence chooses that directly which his reason judges to be evil; which seems to overthrow their whole hypothesis. (48.)

X. I con-

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(48.) Farther, if the mind can suspend the satisfaction of any urgent desire (which Mr. *Locke* allows * and therein places all its liberty) then it can as easily curb, or run counter to any natural appetite; since no greater power seems to be requisite for the one than for the other. If we can hinder the will from being determined by any desire of absent good without any appearance of greater good on the other side, which might raise an opposite desire able to counterbalance it, as our author has shewn that we can; then we shall be equally able to prevent its following the ultimate determination of the judgment, even without any reason for so doing; after any determination of the judgment, it will be still as undetermined, and indifferent towards *Volition*, as Mr. *Locke* supposes the operative powers to be in regard to *action* †, and consequently good, whether absolute or comparative, is neither the adequate efficient cause, nor a necessary means to the determination of the will. This act of *suspension* therefore must either be solely founded in the self-moving power of the mind, and of consequence be naturally independent on all motives, reasons, &c. and an instance of the mind's absolute freedom from any external determination; which is a contradiction to Mr. *Locke's* general hypothesis; or else itself must be determined by some motive or external cause; and then it will be difficult to make it free in any sense. Let us observe how Mr. *Locke* endeavours to reconcile these two notions together. Our liberty according to him,

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* Book 2. C. 21. Sect. 47. and 50. † See note 49.

X. I confess, they offer some solutions here, but such as are so subtle, so obscure, and so much above the comprehension of the vulgar, that most persons have taken a distaste to them, given up the cause of liberty as desperate, and gone over to the former sect: but if any one will undertake either to give a more clear and full explanation of the common opinion, or bring solutions of those difficulties which occur in it, he will find me so far from being his adversary, that he may expect my assent, encouragement and assistance. This indeed were very much to be wished, but in the mean time I shall endeavour to see whether these things cannot be explained more clearly in another manner.

There are answers offered to these difficulties, but they are far from being clear. On this account many have gone over to the former opinion

S U B

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is founded in a general absolute inclination of the mind to happiness, which obliges us to suspend the gratification of our desire in particular cases, till we see whether it be not inconsistent with the general good. "The stronger ties, says he, (Sect. 51.) we have to an unalterable pursuit of happiness in general, which is our greatest good, and which, as such, our desires always follow, the more are we free from any necessary determination of our will to any particular action, and from a necessary compliance with our desire set upon any particular, and then appearing preferably good, till we have duly examined whether it has a tendency to, or be inconsistent with our real happiness." And again, (Sect. 52.) "Whatever necessity determines to the pursuit of real bliss, the same necessity, with the same force, establishes suspense, deliberation and scrutiny of each successive desire, whether the satisfaction of it does not interfere with our true happiness and mislead us from it." If by the word *necessity* he means absolutely *physical necessity* (which it must be, if it be any thing to the present purpose) he has discovered a pretty odd foundation for his liberty. Nay, if this force which draws us towards happiness in general, be absolute and irresistible, as his words import, it will draw us equally towards all particular appearances of it, and consequently prove as bad a ground for *suspension* as for liberty. But in truth this suspension is neither founded in any necessity of pursuing happiness in general, nor is itself an original power of the mind distinct from that of volition, but only one particular exercise or modification of it. "'Tis willing

S U B S E C T. III.

Another notion of liberty and election proposed.

The appetites and powers attain their proper end, by exercise, which is the greatest perfection of them, and their best estate.

IN order to make my meaning better understood, we must observe, in the *first* place, that there are certain powers, faculties and appetites implanted in us by nature, which are designed for action; and when these exert their proper actions about objects, they produce a grateful and agreeable sensation in us. The exercise of them therefore pleases us; and from hence probably all our pleasure and delight arises; consequently our happiness, if we have any, seems to consist in the proper exercise of those powers and faculties which nature has bestowed upon us: for they appear to be implanted in us for no other end, but that by the use and exercise of them those things may be effected which are agreeable. Nor can they be at rest, or enjoy themselves any otherwise than as those things are produced by or in them, for the production or reception of which they are designed by nature. Now every power or faculty is directed to

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“willing (as the author of the *Philosophical Enquiry* rightly observes) to defer willing about the matter proposed,” and is no way different from the common cases of willing and choosing, except that it is the most evident demonstration of the mind’s perfect liberty in willing, and so obvious that Mr. *Locke* could not get over it, and therefore styles it the source of all our liberty, and that wherein consists *free-will*. (Sect. 47.) Though he soon explains it away again, by endeavouring to force it into his system. That this power of *suspension* is not sufficient to denominate a man *free*, See *Impartial Enquiry*, p. 44.

to the prosecution of its proper acts. They attain their end therefore by exercise, which must be esteemed the greatest perfection, and most happy state of any being *. For that is a state of happiness, if any such can be conceived, wherein every thing is done which pleases, and every thing removed which is displeasing: neither doth it seem possible to imagine a more happy one.

There is a certain agreement fixt by nature between some appetites, &c. and their objects, whereby they act upon the presence of them, and cease from action upon their removal.

II. Secondly, It is to be observed, that among our appetites, faculties and powers, some are determined to their operations by objects peculiar to themselves. For upon the presence of their objects they necessarily exert their actions, if rightly disposed, and cease from operation upon their absence, and have no tendency towards any other objects but their own. The sight perceives nothing but light, Colours, &c. and upon the removal of these, its action † ceases. The understanding itself distinguishes those objects which are communicated to it by the senses, or perceived by reflection, from one another; disposes and reposes them in the memory; but yet has certain bounds which it cannot exceed: and so of the rest. There is therefore a certain natural fitness, a fixt conformity between these powers and their objects, on which account they exert their actions upon the presence of the objects, and delight themselves in exercise: but are uneasy at the presence of those things which hinder it. If then there be any natural force in any

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* See *Scott's Christian Life*. Vol. I. pag. 8, 9.

† It may be observed here once for all, that our author seldom uses this word *action* in a strict philosophical sense (according to which these should rather be called *passions*) but generally takes the vulgar expressions, when they will serve to explain his meaning.

Liberty would be of disservice to an agent endowed with such appetites, &c. as these only.

We may conceive a power between which and any particular object there is naturally no other agreeableness but what may arise from the determination of the power itself.

any object to promote or hinder the exercise of any power or faculty, that object in regard to it is to be esteemed good or evil.

III. Those objects which thus promote or impede the action are sufficiently distinguished from each other by the power or faculty itself; those that are absent or future, are judged of by the understanding, and what the mind determines to be the best in them, that we are obliged to pursue. He that does otherwise disobeys the law of reason. If therefore all our powers and faculties were thus determined to their proper objects, it would seem an imperfection for man to be free, and he would have been much more happy without such a liberty: for he receives no benefit from it, but one of the greatest evils, *viz.* a power of doing amiss.

IV. It seems not impossible to conceive a power of a quite different nature from these which may be more indifferent in respect to the objects about which it exercises itself*. To which no one thing is naturally more agreeable than another but that will be the fittest to which it shall happen † to be applied: Between which and the object, to which it is determined, by itself or by something else, there should naturally be no more suitableness or connection than between it and any other thing; but all the *suitableness* there is, should arise from the *application* or *determination* itself. For as the earth is no man's right by nature, but belongs to the prime

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* See Sect. 5. Subsect. 2. par. 12. and 15.

† That this word is not intended to imply what we commonly mean by Chance, see par. 18.

prime occupant, and the right arises from that very occupation ; so there may possibly be a power to which no object is by nature peculiarly adapted, but any thing may become suitable to it, if it happen to be applied ; since its suitability proceeds from the application, as we said before. Now it does not seem any more absurd for a power to create an agreeableness between itself and an object, by applying itself to that object, or that to itself, than for a man to acquire a right to a thing by occupying it. For, as in civil laws, some things are forbidden because they are inconvenient, others are inconvenient and evil because forbidden ; so it may be in powers, faculties and appetites ; viz. some may be determined by the natural suitability of the objects, and in others, the suitability to the objects may arise from the determination. For this faculty may be naturally inclined to exercise, and one exercise be more agreeable than another, not from any natural fitness of one more than another, but from the application of the faculty itself ; since another would often be no less agreeable, if it had happened to be determined to that. Nothing therefore seems to hinder but that there may be such a power or faculty, at least with respect to very many objects. (49.)

V. Fourthly,

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(49.) Our author's notion of *indifference* has been grossly misunderstood by all his adversaries, who have accordingly raised terrible outcries against it, as destroying the essential and immutable distinction between good and evil ; subverting appetites, making reason and judgment useless, and confounding every thing. We shall just observe here, that it cannot be applied to the *whole man*, nor was designed by our author to include all manner of external objects, actions, and relations of things, as they seem to have understood it. For every man in his wits must be sufficiently sensible

Such a power as this cannot be determined by goodness in objects, since the goodness of them depends upon its determination.

V. Fourthly, if then we suppose such a power as this, it is plain, that the agent endowed with it cannot be determined in its operations by any pre-existent goodness in the object; for since the agreeableness between it and the objects, at least in most of them, is supposed to arise from the determination, the agreeableness cannot possibly be

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fible that all things do not affect him in the same manner, even before he has willed any of them. I cannot be indifferent to meat, or drink, or rest, when I am hungry, thirsty, or weary. Some natural objects are agreeable, and produce pleasure in me, and others the contrary, whether I will or no; and the same may be said of the *moral sense*. Nay our author every where allows their full force to what he calls the *appetites*; and asserts that whatever contradicts them must be attended with uneasiness. It is not an absolute indifference therefore of the *man* or mind in general, nor of the *senses*, perception or judgment, which he contends for; but it relates wholly to that *particular power* of the mind which we call *willing*, and which will appear to be in its own nature, or *physically*, indifferent to acting or not acting in any particular manner, notwithstanding all these different affections or passions of the mind raised by the different objects. Let a thing seem never so pleasant and agreeable, never so reasonable, fit and eligible to us, yet there is still a natural possibility for us to will the contrary; and consequently the bare *power of willing* is in itself indifferent to either side; which is all the indifference that our author contends for. Now such an indifference as this Mr. *Locke* allows to be in the *operative* powers of man, though he confines it, I think, improperly to them alone * “ I have the ability, says he, to move my hand, or to let it rest: that operative power is indifferent to move or not to move my hand: I am then in that respect perfectly free. My will determines that operative power to rest; yet I am free, because the indifferency of that my operative power to act or not to act still remains; the power of moving my hand is not at all impaired by the determination of my will, which at present orders rest; the indifferency of that power to act is just as it was before, as will appear, if the will puts it to the trial, by ordering the contrary.” The same, I think, may be applied to the *will* itself in regard to motives, &c. with much more justice than to these operative powers. Nay, these can scarcely be called indifferent to action after the determination of the will; but follow instantly (as we observed in note 42.) in most cases when they are in their right state. What I will or resolve to do, that

* B. 2. C. 21. Sect 71.

be the cause of that determination on which itself depends. But the congruity of the object with the faculty is all the goodness in it, therefore there is nothing good in regard to this power, at least in those objects to which it is indifferent, till it has embraced it, nor evil till it has rejected it: since then the determination of the power to the object is prior to the goodness and the cause of it, this power cannot be determined by that goodness in its operations.

VI. Fifthly, Such a power as this, if it be granted to exist, cannot be determined by any *uncasiness* Nor by any *uncasiness*.

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that I certainly effect, if I have power to do it, and continue in the same will or resolution. However, this indifference of the operative powers is what can never constitute morality (as was observed in the same place) since their operations are no farther moral than as they are consequent upon, and under the direction of the will.

There must then be another indifference prior to them, in order to make the exertion of them free in any tolerable sense. Concerning this *antecedent indifference* Mr. *Locke* enquires whether it be antecedent to the thought and judgment of the *understanding*, as well as to the decree of the *will*? ¶ We answer it is antecedent to and independent on any particular thought or judgment, and continues equally independent after them; it remains after the determination of the judgment in the very same state as he supposes that of the operative powers to be after the determination of the will. Its liberty is placed, as he says, in a *state of darkness*; and so is that of the operative powers; which he allows: It is indeed in itself (as it is commonly styled) a *blind principle*, and so is every principle in nature but the *understanding*; and though the exercise of the *will*, as well as of the *operative powers*, be generally accompanied with *intelligence*, without which there can be no *moral* liberty: yet these are, I think, very different faculties, and often exercised separately, and therefore should always be considered distinctly; *freedom* is one thing, *intelligence* another; a *moral* or accountable being consists of both.

For a more complete view of this question, see *Episcop. Instit. Theol.* l. 4. c. 6. and *Tract. de Lib. Arb.* There is also a good defence of our author's notion of indifference in *Limborch, Theol. Christ.* l. 2. c. 23. sect. 20, &c.

¶ Ibid.

easiness arising from the things about which it is conversant. For it is supposed to be indifferent not only in respect of external objects, but also of its own operations, and will please itself, whether it accepts the thing or rejects it; whether it exerts this act or another. These objects then will neither please nor displease till this indifference be removed; but it is supposed to be removed by the application or determination of the power itself; therefore anxiety does not produce but presuppose its determination. Let us suppose this power to be already determined (it matters not how) to embrace a certain object, or to exert the proper actions relating to it, *desire* manifestly follows this determination, and desire is followed by an endeavour to obtain and enjoy the object pursuant to the application of the power. But if any thing should hinder or stop this endeavour, and prevent the power from exerting those operations which it undertook to discharge in relation to the object, then indeed uneasiness would arise from the hindrance of the power, *anxiety* would therefore be the *effect* of the determination of this power, but by no means the *cause* of it.*

Not by the
under-
standing

VII. Sixthly, Supposing such an agent as this to be endowed also with understanding, he might use

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* Observe what follows from Mr. Locke, "There is a case wherein a man is at liberty in respect of *willing*, and that is the choosing a remote good as an end to be pursued. Here a man may suspend the act of his choice from being determined for or against the thing proposed, till he has examined whether it be really of a nature in itself, and consequences to make him happy or no. For when he has once chosen it, and thereby it is become a part of his happiness, it raises desire, and this proportionably gives him uneasiness, which determines his will, and sets him at work in pursuit of his choice on all occasions that offer. b. 2. c. 21. sect. 36."

use it to propose matters fit to be done, but not to determine whether he should do them or not. For the understanding or reason, if it speak truth, represents what is in the objects, and does not feign what it finds not in them: since therefore, before the determination of this power, things are supposed to be indifferent to it, and no one better or worse than another; the understanding, if it performs its duty right, will represent this indifference, and not pronounce one to be more eligible than another; for the understanding directs a thing to be done no otherwise than by determining that it is better; as therefore the goodness of things, with respect to this power, depends upon its determination, and they are for the most part good if it embrace, and evil if it reject them, it is manifest that the judgment of the understanding concerning things depends upon the same, and that it cannot pronounce upon the goodness or badness of them, till it perceives whether the power has embraced or rejected them. The understanding therefore must wait for the determination of this power, before it can pass a judgment, instead of the power's waiting for the judgment of that understanding before it can be determined.

VIII. Seventhly, But though this power cannot be determined in its operations by any judgment of the understanding, yet the understanding is necessary, in order to propose matters of action, and to distinguish possible ones for those that are impossible. For though the goodness of things with respect to the agent, proceeds from the determination, yet the possibility or impossibility is in the things themselves, and there is need of the understanding to distinguish
 between

Yet such an agent has need of understanding in order to distinguish possible things from impossible.

between objects, lest this agent falling upon absurdities, procure to itself uneasiness. Not that an object is therefore good because it is possible; for if it be rejected it will be evil; nor will it be immediately disagreeable because impossible, for attempting an impossibility may be pleasing to us, as we may prefer the exercise of this power, (which is the thing that pleases us, as we said before) but he that makes this attempt, must necessarily be unhappy in the event; for since the thing which the power undertakes is impossible to be done, uneasiness must necessarily follow the hindrance of its exercise, and the final disappointment of its end.

If the agent be of infinite power, he needs no other limitation. IX. This then must be assigned as the *first limitation* of such a power, viz. that it confine itself to possibilities, and there needs no other, if the agent be of infinite power, in order to the obtaining of its end.

But an agent of finite power must also consult his abilities. X. Eightly, But if the agent's power be finite, it has need also to consult its abilities, and not determine itself to any thing which may exceed them, otherwise it will be as much disappointed in its endeavour as if he had attempted absolute impossibilities. And this is the *second limitation* of this power. It is impossible, you will say, for an appetite to pursue such things as the understanding evidently declares not to be in the power of the agent. I answer, the senses and natural appetites are gratified with their objects, and please themselves, though reason remonstrate against them, and condemn that pleasure as pernicious. How much more easily then may this *voluntive appetite*, which arises in the agent from application only, be conceived to delight in its good, though the understanding oppose it, and condemn that delight as foolish and of short duration.

ration. Why nature granted such a liberty to this power, and how it conduces to the good of the whole, will be shewn afterwards.

XI. Hitherto we have either considered this power alone in the agent, or as joined with the understanding. But the agent endowed with it, may also have other powers and appetites which are determined to their objects by a natural congruity; yet neither can it be determined in its operations by them. We must distinguish between the *operations* of these appetites, and the *pleasure* which arises from the exercise of them. These, when rightly disposed, must necessarily exert their operations upon the presence of their objects; but it is not at all necessary that they should delight and please themselves in these operations. For instance, a bitter and nauseous savour is disagreeable to the taste: but though this be felt, yet urgent hunger makes it pleasant, the craving of the appetite overcoming the disagreeableness of the taste. This pleasure indeed is not pure, but mixed and diluted proportionably to the excess of the prevailing appetite. For, suppose that there are three degrees of uneasiness from the hunger, and two from the bitterness; the agent, to avoid three, must necessarily bear two; which being deducted, there remains only one degree of solid pleasure; whereas if he had met with suitable and sweet food, there would have been three.

XII. Since therefore the pleasure which arises from the satisfaction of these natural appetites may be overcome by a stronger appetite, there is no reason to doubt but this power which is indifferent to objects may overcome all the other powers and appetites. For all these are limited by their objects,

Such an agent cannot be determined by his other appetites.

This power is superior to all the appetites, and subdued by none.

jects, and therefore have certain bounds, but this power has no bounds,* nor is there any thing wherein it cannot please itself, if it does but happen to be determined to it. Now since the natural appetites themselves may be contrary to each other (as we have shewn) and one of them be overcome by the excess of another, how much more easily may this power be conceived to go against these Appetites, and since it is of a very different and superior kind, it is probable that it can conquer all others, and be itself subdued by none.

It seems to be given for this end, that the agent might have something to delight in when the natural appetites must necessarily be frustrated.

XIII. Nay we may imagine it to be given for this very end, that the agent might have wherein to please itself, when those things which are agreeable to the natural appetites cannot be had, as it very often happens. As the natural powers, and appetites receive pleasure and pain from objects, they must necessarily be deprived of pleasure and undergo pain, according to the laws of motion, and the order of external things. Since then they are often frustrated, they must render the agents possessed of them liable to misery, as well as make them capable of happiness; but the agent can have this always to delight itself in; and it is an advantage to it to be able to quit the other appetites, and please itself in restraining them, or acting contrary to them. For since every faculty is satisfied in its exercise, the strength of this cannot be more signally displayed in any thing, than in running counter sometimes to all the appetites. For this must either be sometimes done, or the agent must be destitute of all manner of good, and remain entirely miserable;

* i. e. in its objects, see the next note.

miserable; since by the laws of nature, things contrary to the appetites † must be endured.

XIV. And from hence it is very evident how desirable such a power as this would be: for if it happen to be determined to such things as are agreeable to the appetites, it augments, it multiplies the enjoyment; but if it should be determined to undergo those things which are repugnant to the appetites, and which must necessarily be born sometimes, it might diminish, nay quite remove the uneasiness, or convert it into pleasure. (50.)

This power, by its accession, encreases the pleasure of the other appetites; by opposition removes, or at least alleviates the pain.

XV.

NOTES.

† viz. *In painful remedies, disagreeable potions, &c. see* subsect. 5. par. 9.

(50) This is not much more than what Mr. *Locke* asserts* in answer to the enquiry, “Whether it be in a man’s power to change the pleasantness and uneasiness that accompanies any sort of action? And to that, says he, it is plain in many cases he can. Men may and should correct their palates, and give a relish to what either has, or they suppose has none. The relish of the mind is as various as that of the body; and like that too may be altered; and it is a mistake to think that men cannot change the displeasingness or indifference that is in actions into pleasure and desire, if they will but do what is in their power.” But it is objected by *Leibnitz*, against our author’s notion, that if it could create pleasure by an arbitrary determination and bare election, it might for the same reason produce happiness *in infinitum* † and then how could we ever be miserable except we chose to be so? Which argument seems to be founded on a mistake of our author’s meaning, as if he had intended to assert that all the good and agreeableness in every thing or action, proceeds absolutely and entirely from our will: and also, that this will is as unlimited in its *exercise* as in its *objects*, and consequently that we might have any way, and at any time, as much happiness as we pleased, purely by willing it; all which propositions are as false as they are foreign to the intention of our author, who insists only upon this, that the act of willing, like the exercise of all our other faculties, is in itself delightful to a certain degree: this, when applied to an object which is itself agreeable, must add to the pleasure arising from it; when determined to a contrary one (both which kinds of objects he always supposes) must deduct from the pain; when to an indifferent one

it

* B. 2. C. 21. Sect. 69. † *Essais de Theologie*, p. 466, 467.

The rest
of the ap-
petites are
not to be
balked
unnecessa-
rily.

XV: It must be confessed that some kind of struggle will be hereby excited in this agent; but a struggle attended with some pleasure, though it be qualified and not perfectly pure, is better than to be under absolute misery. Nay, the consciousness of a power to please itself against the bent and inclination of the natural appetites, may cause a greater pleasure than could arise from the fruition of those things which would, if present, gratify these appetites. Yet this agent is obliged to have some regard to the appetites, and not to disturb them unnecessarily, nor restrain them from a due enjoyment of their proper objects. He that does this will bring upon himself uneasiness, and a needless contest. Though therefore it be not at all proper that such a power should be absolutely determined by the natural appetites, yet it is fit that they should persuade it, and that some regard be had to them in its determinations. And this may be reckoned its *third limitation*.

Such an
agent as
this is
self-
active.

XVI. Ninthly, An agent possessed of such a principle as this would be *self-active*, and capable

NOTES.

it must make that positively agreeable, by conferring so much absolute happiness.

But still this exercise of the will, and of consequence the pleasure attending it, must in all finite creatures be essentially and necessarily *finite*, as well as the exercise of all their other powers; and though it has no bounds as to the number and kind of its objects, yet it must be limited as to its own nature and the degree of its exercise. This appears to me easily conceivable, and matter of experience. We find ourselves generally able to turn our thoughts to any object indifferently, but does any person hence imagine that he can fix his thoughts upon any particular object with an unlimited intenseness, or think *infinitely*? However, it is evidently no good consequence to infer, that because I can will or choose a thing absolutely and *freely*, therefore I can will it *in infinitum*. May I not as justly be said to perceive or understand a thing *in infinitum*, because I perceive or understand it at all? See Note K.

ble of being determined in its operations by itself alone. Now there is sometimes an absolute necessity for it to be determined; for when any thing is proposed to be done immediately, it must necessarily either act or suspend its action: one of them must necessarily be; but when either of them is done, the power is determined by that very act: and no less force is requisite to suspend than to exert the act, as common sense and experience may inform any one. * A determination then about a thing once proposed to be done, is unavoidable; and since it can neither be determined by any good or evil pre-existent in the objects, nor by the natural powers or appetites, nor by their objects; it must of necessity either continue undetermined, or else determine itself. But though it be naturally free from any determination, yet the nature of the thing requires that it should be determined on every particular occasion; and since there is nothing external to do this, it remains that it determine itself. We shall call this determination an *election*; for as it is naturally indifferent to many things, it will please itself in electing one before another.

XVII. Nor is it a proper question to ask, Is determined by himself, and things are not chosen because they please him, but please him because they are chosen. what determines it to an election? For if any such thing were supposed, it would not be indifferent; *i. e.* it is contrary to the nature of this agent that there should be any thing at all to determine it. In relation to a *passive power*, † which has a natural and necessary connection with the object, the presence of which determines it to act, we may reasonably enquire what that good is which may determine it to exert any particular

* See Note 48. † See *Locke*, Chap. 21. Se . 2.

particular action; but it is not so in an *active* power, the very nature of which is to *make* an object agreeable to itself, *i. e.* good, by its own proper act. For here the goodness of the object does not precede the act of election, so as to excite it, but election makes the goodness in the object; that is, the thing is agreeable because chosen, and not chosen because agreeable: we cannot therefore justly enquire after any other cause of election than the power itself.

Yet he is
not deter-
mined by
chance.

XVIII. If these things be true, you will say, this agent will be determined by *chance*, and not by *reason*; but in reality here is no room for chance, if by chance be understood that which happens beside the intention of the agent: for this very election is the intention of the agent, and it is impossible that a man should intend beside his intention. As for *reason*, he that prefers a less good to a greater, must be judged to act unreasonably; but he that makes that a greater good by choosing it, which before his choice had either no good at all in it, or a less, he certainly chooses with reason. You may urge that *contingency* at least is to be admitted; if by this you mean that this agent does some things which are not at all necessary, I readily own such a contingency, for that is the very liberty I would establish.

Is the true
cause of
his acti-
ons.

XIX. Tenthly, It is evident that such an agent as this, if it be allowed that there is such an one, is the true *cause* of his actions, and that whatever he does may justly be imputed to him. A power which is not master of itself, but determined to act by some other, is in reality not the *efficient* cause of its actions, but only the *instrumental* or *occasional*, (if we may use the term of some philosophers) for it may be said that the thing is
done

done in it, or by it, rather than that it does the thing itself. No person therefore imputes to himself, or esteems himself the cause of those actions to which he believes himself to be necessarily determined: if then any inconvenience arise from them, he will look upon it as a misfortune, but not as a crime; and whatever it be, he will refer it to the determiner. Nor will he be angry with himself, unless he be conscious that it was in his power not to have done them: but he cannot be conscious of this (except through ignorance and error) who is determined by another. For no others ought to be looked upon as true causes, but such as are *free*. Those that operate necessarily, are to be conceived as *passive*, and we must recur to some other which imposes that necessity on them, till we arrive at one that is free, where we must stop. Since then the agent endowed with this power, is determined by himself and no other, and is *free* in his operations, we must acquiesce in him as a real cause, and he ought to be esteemed the author of whatever he does, well or ill. (L.)

XX. Eleventhly,

NOTES.

(L.) Against this it is objected that the quite contrary follows. For to hit on a good action by a motion absolutely indifferent and not in consequence of some antecedent good or evil qualities in the agent is to fall on it blindly, by mere *chance*, and so fortune not the agent is to be thanked or blamed. He rather is to be blamed or praised that owes his good or ill actions to his antecedent good or ill qualities.

To which I answer, that this is to deny and dispute against the conclusion, without answering one word of the premises, which are so plain and evident, that I cannot reckon the argument other than a demonstration; whereas that which is opposed to it is against the common sense of mankind.

For those good or bad qualities that oblige him to do a good or bad action are either from himself, that is his choice; or proceed from outward agents that produced them in him: if from his own choice, then it agrees with the author's opinion; but if from

Is capable
of happi-
ness.

XX. Eleventhly, It is manifest that such an agent as this is capable of *happiness*. For that person must be happy who can always please himself, and this agent can evidently do so. For since things are supposed to please him, not by any necessity of nature, but by mere election, and there is nothing which can compel him to choose this rather than another; it is plain that the agent endowed with this power may always choose such things as it can enjoy, and refuse, *i. e.* not desire, or not choose those things which are impossible to be had. And from hence it appears of how great importance it

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from some outward agent, then it is plain the good or evil is to be imputed to that agent only. *Quod est causa cause est etiam causa causati.*

I cannot better explain this than by an example. Suppose I am in distress, and there is one man that by the commands of his prince, by his own interest, and politic considerations is obliged to relieve me, and is in such circumstances that he cannot possibly avoid doing it; the other is under no manner of obligation, may do it or let it alone, yet seeing my misfortune he chooses and pleases himself in doing me a good office. Let any one of sense judge to which of these I owe the greatest obligation; or if the world would with patience hear me excuse my ingratitude by saying, Sir, there was no obligation on you to help me, you might have done it, or let it alone, therefore it was mere *chance*, that determined you. Would not the reply be naturally, the less obligation was on him that relieved you, the greater your obligation is to him for his kindness? If it be said that the relief proceeded from compassion and good nature, which were antecedently in the benefactor, and therefore it was valuable; suppose the person that did this office had always before been remarkable for cruelty and ill nature, ought the obliged person to value the kindness less for that? Quite contrary; it was rather a greater favour to him that it was singular. But suppose it proceeded from a general compassion and good nature, that had nothing of *choice* in them, so that the person could not help doing it; ought I not to thank him for it, and give him the praises due to the action? I ought to love and commend him for his useful qualities, as I do the sun: but if I were sure that there was nothing of choice in them, I had no more reason to thank him than the tyrant whose imposthume was cured by the wound designed to kill him, had reason to thank the assailant.

it is, whether that agreeableness by which things please the appetites, be ~~communicated~~ by nature, or effected by the agent himself. For if good and evil proceed from nature and be inherent in objects, so as to render them agreeable or disagreeable, antecedent to the election, the happiness of this agent will also depend upon them; and unless the whole series of things be so ordered, that nothing can happen contrary to his appetites, he must fall short of happiness. For his appetites will be disappointed; which is the very thing we call unhappiness. But if objects derive their agreeableness or disagreeableness from the choice, it is clear that he who has his choice may always enjoy the thing chosen, (unless he choose impossibilities, &c.) and never have his appetite frustrated, *i. e.* be always happy. Not that *all* things are indifferent with respect to this power, for it admits of some limitations, as was observed, by choosing beyond which it must necessarily fail of happiness.

XXI. Twelfthly, It is to be observed that agents, whose felicity depends upon the agreement of external objects to their appetites, stand in need of a perfect and almost infinite knowledge to comprehend distinctly all the relations, habitudes, natures and consequences of things; if they come short of it, it is impossible but that they must often fall into pernicious errors, and be disappointed of their desires, that is, be often miserable: Hence anxiety and disquiet of mind must necessarily arise, and they would be agitated with continual doubts and uncertainty, lest what they choose should not prove the best. These agents then were either to be created without a prospect of futurity, or to be endowed

An imperfect understanding is sufficient for his happiness, if he do but distinguish between possibilities, and impossibilities, things agreeable and disagreeable to the senses, and consult his conscience.

with a perfect understanding; if neither were done, they must of necessity be very miserable; for we can scarce conceive a greater misery than to be held in suspense about happiness, and compelled to choose among objects not sufficiently known, in which nevertheless a mistake would be attended with unavoidable misery. There is none but is sufficiently apprehensive how anxious, how solicitous, how miserable it must be to hang in such a doubt as this; but if the agreeableness of things be supposed to depend upon *election*, a very imperfect understanding will serve to direct this agent, nor need he to comprehend all the natures and habitudes of things: for if he do but distinguish possible things from impossible, those things which are pleasant to the senses from them that are unpleasant, that which is agreeable to the faculties, from what is disagreeable, and consult his own abilities, *viz.* how far his power reaches; (all which are easily discovered) he will know enough to make him happy. Nor is there need of long deliberation, whether any thing to be done be the very best; for if the election be but made within these bounds, that will become best which is chosen.

Though liberty would be a prejudice to other agents, yet it is a sure foundation of happiness to this, whose convenience depends not on objects, but election.

XXII. He that enjoys the principle of pleasing himself in his choice cannot reasonably complain of nature, though he have but a very imperfect understanding; for there will always be objects enow ready to offer themselves within these bounds, upon which he may exercise his choice, and please himself: that is, he may always enjoy happiness. Though free-will then be of no use, as was said before, to an agent capable of being determined only by the convenience of external things, nay, though it be pernicious,

icious, as only tending to pervert reason and produce sin; yet to an agent whose convenience does not depend upon the things, but the choice, it is of the greatest importance, and as we have seen, the sure and only foundation of felicity. And from hence it appears how valuable and how desirable such an active principle as this would be.

XXIII. All this seems to be coherent enough, clear enough, and easy to be understood, though some may look upon it as a little too subtle. It remains that we enquire whether this be a mere hypothesis without any foundation in fact, or there is really such a principle to be found in nature (51.).

These things are clear enough though they may appear to be a little too subtle.

SUBJECT. IV.

That there is an agent who is pleased with objects only because he chooses them.

WE have seen in the former Subsection, that some things are adapted to the appetites by the constitution of nature itself, and

God is such an agent as this.

ON

NOTES.

(51.) For an explanation of our author's principle of *indifference*, above what has been said in note 49. and will be enlarged on in note 58. we shall only observe here, that most of the objections brought by the author of the *Philosophical Enquiry*, p. 69, &c. are built upon the old blunder of confounding this indifference as applied to the mind, in respect of its self determining powers of *willing* or *acting*, with another, which is falsely referred to the passive powers of *perception* and *judgment*. With respect to the former faculties all things are physically indiffer-

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on that account are good and agreeable to them; but that we may conceive a power which can produce goodness or agreeableness in the things, by conforming itself to them, or adapting them to it: hence things please this agent, not because they are good in themselves, but become good because they are chosen. We have demonstrated before, how great a perfection, and of what use such a power would be, and that there is such a power in nature appears from hence, *viz.* we must necessarily believe that God is invested with it.

Because
nothing
external is
either
good or
bad to
him be-
fore elec-
tion.

II. For in the first place, nothing in the creation is either good or bad to him before his election, he has no appetite to gratify with the enjoyment of things without him. He is therefore absolutely *indifferent* to all external things, and can neither receive benefit nor harm from any of them. What then should determine his will to act? Certainly nothing *without* him; therefore he determines himself, and creates to himself a kind of appetite by choosing. For when the choice is made, he will have as great attention and regard to the effectual procuring of that which he has chosen, as if he were excited to this endeavour by a natural and necessary appetite. And he will esteem such things as tend to accomplish these elections, good; such as obstruct them, evil.

Because
his own
will is
the cause
of good-
ness in the
creatures.

III. Secondly, the divine will is the cause of good in the creatures, and upon it they depend,

as

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rent or alike, that is, no one can properly affect, incline or move them more than another; with regard to the latter, most things are not indifferent, but necessarily produce pleasure or pain, are agreeable or disagreeable, whether we choose them or not: Our author is to be understood only in relation to the former, in this and the following Sections, though he often uses general terms.

as almost every one acknowledges. For created beings have all that they have from the will of God ; nor can they be any thing else than what he willed. It is plain then that all these agree and are conformable to his will, either efficient or permissive, and that their original goodness is founded in this conformity. And since all things proceed from one and the same will, which cannot be contrary to itself, as it is restrained within its proper bounds by infinite wisdom ; it is also certain that all things are consistent with each other, that every thing contributes as much as possible to the preservation of itself and the whole system ; which we must reckon their *secondary goodness*. All the goodness then of the creatures is owing to the divine will, and dependent on it ; for we cannot apprehend how they could be either good or evil in themselves, since they were nothing at all antecedent to the act of the divine will : and they were as far from being good with regard to God himself, till upon willing their existence he by that act of election both constituted them good in relation to him ; and by an unity of will made them agreeable to one another. It is evident that the divine will was accompanied in this, as in all other cases, by his goodness and wisdom ; but it proceeds immediately from his will that things please God, *i. e.* are *Good*. For many things are not agreeable to his goodness and wisdom purely because he did not will them, and while he does not will any thing it cannot be good.

From whence it appears undeniably that his will could not be determined to election by any goodness in the creatures. For before that election,

tion, which is declared to be the cause of goodness in created beings, nothing could be either good or bad; but when the election is made, that only is evil which obstructs the execution of it, and that good which promotes it. The goodness of things is therefore to be determined by their agreeableness to the divine will, and not that by the agreeableness or goodness of things (M.).

IV. Thirdly,

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(M.) The objections here are 1st, that if this be true, before God determined to create the world he could see nothing better in virtue than in vice.

It were a sufficient answer to this objection to say there is no harm in it, if it were true; for we must consider that God from all eternity determined to create the world, and therefore there neither was any thing, nor can any thing be conceived before that determination.

But adly, We ought to remember that virtue and vice arise from the congruity of things created by God; what is agreeable to a reasonable nature is virtue, what is contrary, vice, and that there is no other cause why one nature is reasonable and another without reason, but the will of God; and therefore vice and virtue must entirely depend on that will. The plain reason of men's mistake in the case is this; They first suppose God has willed that a nature should be reasonable, and then forgetting that this depends entirely on his will, they suppose this nature to be of itself, and then argue that the congruity or incongruity of things to it, cannot depend on the will of God, because he cannot make what is congruous to it incongruous; that is in reality his will cannot be contrary to itself.

adly, It is objected, that this opinion leaves no difference between natural and positive laws: for a positive law is what depends on the will of God; and according to this position natural laws depend on the same, and so the distinction between them is taken away.

But the answer to this is so easy, that it is a wonder any should stumble at it. For it is plain that the natures of things have their being from the will of God, and whilst that will continues none can destroy them, and the congruity of things to these natures results from the natures themselves, and is included in the same act of will, that gave the things a being: so that as long as it pleases God to continue their beings such as he has made them, the congruity and incongruity of things necessarily remain and result from that act of will, which made them what they are; inasmuch that

IV. Thirdly, We must not therefore attend to such as declare that God chooses things because they

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the divine will must be contrary to itself, if it went about to separate them (*i. e.* the nature from the congruity) and therefore these are joined together by a *natural law*. But when God by a new act of will, subsequent to the being of any thing, requires something to be done by it which was not included in that first act of will which gave it a being, then that is said to be enjoined by a *positive law*; and as this was required by an act subsequent to the being, so it may be again removed by another without destroying the being itself on which it is imposed, or without any contrariety in God's will. Hence natural laws are indispensable, and cannot be abrogated, whilst the natures to which they belong continue; whereas the positive laws are dispensable and may be repealed.

But 3dly, It is urged that this opinion leads us straight to *Pyrrhonism*, and makes God not only free as to virtue, so that he may make it either good or bad; but likewise to the truth or falshood of things, so that he may change their nature and make three and three not to be six.

It were a sufficient answer to this, to say the case is not parallel; for the goodness of things is supposed to arise from the will of God, which is free; but the truth of them from his intellect, which is a necessary faculty; and therefore though the one might be arbitrary, yet the other cannot. But the truth is, goodness is a conformity to the will of God, and the reason that God cannot will evil is because it is always contrary to some other act of his will, and his will cannot be contrary to itself: and at the same rate, truth is a conformity to his intellect, and the reason that a proposition is true, is because it is so conformable; and since it is so, to suppose it not conformable is to suppose a contradiction. God in making or conceiving six, made and conceived three and three; and therefore to suppose that three and three do not make six, is to suppose a contradiction. In effect it is to say God conceives it wrong; and to say that his power can make it otherwise, is to say that his power can falsify his understanding.

These things are so easy that there can be no doubt about them, if men will not be perverse.

But 4thly, Is not this to make the *essence* of things arbitrary, and so fall in with some *Cartesians*? I answer the author is not concerned with the opinions of *Cartesians*, or any other, farther than he thinks them true. If by making the essence of things arbitrary, be meant that God instead of making a man, might have made a stone, or planted the world with mushrooms instead of herbs and trees; he verily believes he might. If you mean that when God has made a man and planted the world with variety of vegetables; that the man continuing what he is should yet be a stone, or the several plants continuing in their variety should

they are good, as if goodness and the greater good which he perceives in objects, could

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should all be mushrooms, this he thinks impossible. For a man is a creature that is not a stone, and therefore to say he is a stone, or to make him one, is to make him no man. Six is a number consisting of three and three, and to say that a number doth not consist of three and three is to say that it is not six. Man is a creature obliged to be just, &c. by the very constitution of his nature, and to say that he is not obliged to be so, is to say that he is not a man. If it be asked, cannot God will him to do such things as we reckon unjust, &c. I answer he may, but it must be by making him something else, by causing him to cease to be a man: in short by taking away his nature from him, and then neither the notion of manhood, nor injustice will belong to him. The material acts that we call unjust might still be performed by him, but the formal reason of injustice would cease, because that arises from the acts, not as considered in themselves, but as they proceed from a nature to which they are unsuitable.

Thus a man that owes me no money may give me 100*l*. but cannot be said to pay me a debt, because the paying a debt supposes that he owes it; and therefore though a debtor, and one that owes nothing may each give me 100*l*. yet they differ in this, the one is payment of a debt, the other a free gift. And so it is in all those actions that we call unjust, &c. when they are done by a man, they are crimes, because against his nature; but when another creature that has not reason does them, they cannot be called unjust, &c. For example, if a man kills one that no ways injures him, and roasts and eats him, he commits murder, and is guilty of an horrid immorality; but if a lion unprovoked kill and eat a man, it is no crime or wickedness in him. But in as much as men in their way of thinking represent to themselves a nature with all its parts and properties, and find that they cannot remove any of them from that nature, they conclude that the natures of created beings are what they are independently on the will of God; forgetting in the mean time that it is only the divine will that gave or can give a being to any creature with certain parts and properties, and that instead of that creature he could make another without them all, that should have quite different attributes. It is therefore merely from his will that creatures are what they are; but that will having given them a being, or being conceived to have given it; no part or property belonging to them can even in thought be taken from them: and this seems to me a full account of the certainty of those things we call *Eternal Truths*. †

I have

† See the *Impartial Enquiry*, p. 50, 51.

could determine his will*. If the matter had stood thus, it does not seem possible for the world

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I have insisted the longer on this point because I see some indifferent persons as to the main dispute have thought the author mistaken in his asserting the goodness of things to depend immediately on the will of God. Let me add farther, that the author does not say that the goodness of things depends *solely* on God's will; but that his wisdom and power are likewise concerned in them: we must not separate God's will from these attributes; on the contrary his will is limited by the one and executed by the other.

But lastly it is urged that according to these principles virtues are not good antecedently to God's choice, and would not be good if God did not choose them; nay if he chose vices in their stead, they would be good both morally and physically. For obedience to God is good, and if God had commanded vice it would have been man's duty to obey him; and perhaps goodness might this way have been as effectually brought into the world, as by those virtues that arise from the exigence of our nature, as God has now framed it. And from hence they infer that God is as free to make his *second* choice, as we conceive him to be in making his *first*.

But to all this I answer, 1st, I acknowledge that antecedently to God's choice there can be nothing good or bad, because there cannot be any thing at all: the very moment we conceive a thing to be, we must conceive and suppose that God wills it to be what it is, and that he wills it should by its nature and constitution have certain parts and properties; and that as long as the thing continues what it is, God's will continues also to preserve it so: to suppose therefore that he wills at the same time it should be without those parts and properties, is plainly to suppose two contradictory wills in God. Now an obligation to virtue is a property necessarily resulting from the nature of man, and therefore to suppose God to command him not to be virtuous when he has given him such a nature, is a contradiction.

If any would in earnest show that the goodness of things doth not depend upon the will of God, the true way of doing it is to give an instance of something that is good, which doth not suppose an act of God's will; or an example of something evil, that is not manifestly contrary to some act of it.

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* This notion is advanced by Dr. Clarke in his *Demonstration of the Divine Attributes*, Prop. 12. and afterwards explained, as far as it seems capable of explanation, in his *Evidences of Nat. and Rev. Rel.* Prop. 1. The same is insisted on by Leibnitz, Grotius, Russ, Chubb, and many others. We have enquired a little into it already in R. i. See more in note 52.

world to have been made at all. For they who acknowledge God to be the author of it, confess also, that he is absolutely and completely happy in himself, and does not stand in the least need of other things. Now it is inconceivable how external things can be of use to God, who comprehends in himself all things which tend to perfect happiness. He must of necessity therefore be indifferent to all external objects, nor can any reason be assigned, with regard to the things themselves, why he should prefer one to another. It is plain that things are made by God with goodness, that is, with a certain congruity to his own nature ; but they are so far from being made on account of any agreeableness antecedent to the divine will, that, on the contrary, they are necessarily agreeable and pleasant because they are made by his free choice. For since they are nothing in themselves, they must of necessity have both their existence and their agreeableness from that will, from which they solely proceed ; and it is impossible but that they should be conformable to the will which effected them : for God, by willing, makes those things pleasing to him which were before indifferent.

If he had not a power of pleasing himself in election, he could never have made any thing.

V. Unless, therefore, we attribute to him such a power as has been described (namely, an ability

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In short, the congruity of things is their goodness, and that congruity arises from their natures, and they have those natures from the will of God, and those natures must have a congruity because they proceed from one will, which cannot be contrary to itself, because it is conducted by infinite wisdom. All this is sufficiently laid down in the book, and for any one to urge these consequences, and take no notice of the solutions given them, must either proceed from not having read the book, or a worse reason, which I am unwilling to believe.

lity to please himself, by determining himself to action, without any other regard had to the quality of the object, than that it is possible) it seems impossible that ever he should begin to effect any thing without himself. For, as far as we can apprehend, there can be no reason assigned why he should create any thing at all *, why a World, why the present, why at that particular time when it was created, why not before or after, why in this and no other form: he received no advantage or disadvantage from these, no benefit or harm; in short, nothing that could move him to choose one before another. Except, therefore, we attribute to God an active power of determining himself in indifferent matters, upon every particular occasion, and of pleasing himself in that determination according to his choice; he would do nothing at all, he would be for ever indolent in regard to all external things, and the world could not possibly have been made, since no reason could be imagined, why a God absolutely perfect in himself, and absolutely happy, should create any thing without himself. (N.)

VI. Fourthly,

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(N.) To this it is objected, that the understanding of God contains ideas of all things possible, by means whereof all things are eminently in him. That these ideas represent all the good and evil, the perfections, imperfections, order and disorder, the agreements and disagreements that are possible, and his superabundant goodness makes him choose the most advantageous: now these ideas are independent of the will of God, and therefore the perfection or imperfection that they represent in things is antecedent to any act of his will, at least in *ordine nature*, though not of time; v. g. Is it not rather from the nature of numbers than the will of God, that one number is capable of receiving more divisions than another? And can any think that the pains

* i. e. No reason drawn from the nature of the thing to be created. See the two following notes,

If he were moved by the goodness of things to create the world, he would be a necessary Agent.

VI. Fourthly, If we suppose that there was a reason, and that God was moved by it to produce external

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and inconveniencies that attend sensitive creatures, especially the happiness or misery of intelligent beings, are indifferent to God? And yet it is pretended that the hypothesis of God's will being the cause of goodness in the creature must infer all these absurdities.

adly, It is urged that God acts for an end; that it is true, he has no need of the creatures, but yet his goodness induced him to create them, and therefore there was a reason prior to his will: that it is neither by accident, nor without a cause, that he produced them, nor was it of necessity; but he was induced to it by inclination, and his inclination always leads him to the best. He was not indifferent therefore to create or not create the world, and yet creation is a free act.

Lastly, that God is infinitely wise, good and powerful, and as his wisdom shewed him what was best, so his goodness obliged him to choose, and his power enabled him to execute his will: and in as much as infinite worlds are possible, amongst all these his wisdom discovered to him which was best, and his goodness must oblige him to will it.

These are the objections that seem of greatest force, and I have given them all the advantage with which I find them proposed. In answer to them I observe,

That their whole strength depends on this, that God's understanding represents to him, among infinite ways in which things may be done, which is the best, and his goodness obliges him to what is so. Now if this reasoning hold, and amongst infinite schemes there is only one best, I do not see how it is possible to avoid making God a necessary Agent. For in a chain of causes, where every link is necessarily and infallibly connected, the whole must likewise be necessary. If then there be but one best in nature, and if God necessarily and infallibly knows that best, and his goodness obliges him necessarily to choose it, I think the case is plain, all his actions are linked and tyed together by a fatal and infallible necessity.

Against this, therefore, I lay down the following positions, 1st, That there is no creature, or system of creatures, so good, but that a better is possible, and consequently there is none absolutely best. There is indeed a best of beings, viz. God; but there can be no best of creatures. To prove this, we need only consider that there is an infinite distance between God and his creatures, and how perfect soever we conceive any creature or system of creatures, yet the distance between that and God is not lessened, but still continues infinite; and therefore except we can imagine a last in infinity, there neither is nor can be any stop. Hence it follows, that the nature of God and his omnipotence is

such,

external things, it is manifest, that according to this all things will proceed from him necessarily.

For

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such, that whatever number of creatures he has made he may still make more; and howsoever good or perfect, he may still make others better and more perfect. And since in this case whatever he was pleased to create was still infinitely short in goodness and perfection of what he could create, it is plain his understanding could put no limits to his power, nor direct him whether he should create this system or another, whatever he chose being infinitely short of what he might have done; he could never have pleased himself in this method, or determined what world he should have made, and consequently there could never have been any world at all. For if only the best determined him, and there be no best, as appears; then it is impossible he should ever be determined.

This was in effect the argument made use of in the book * to prove that there was properly free-will in God, that is a power to please himself by choosing one thing before another, where the things were perfectly indifferent to him. According to which principle, if it be allowed, though there be no best in nature antecedent to the will of God, yet by choosing one thing before another he will make that the best to him, because his own choice will please him best.

But here I must observe, that most of this dispute, and the embarrassment of men's understandings about it, seems to proceed from their taking these words, *good*, *better* and *best* for absolute qualities inherent in the nature of things; whereas in truth they are only relations arising from certain appetites. They have indeed a foundation, as all relations have, in something absolute, and denote the thing in which they are founded; but yet they themselves imply nothing more than a relation of congruity between some appetite and its objects; as appears from hence, that the same object when applied to an appetite to which it has a congruity is good, and *vice versa*, bad. The earth and air to terrestrial animals are good elements, and necessary to their preservation; the water is bad, which yet affords the best receptacle for fishes. The nature of the earth, air and water continue the same; and shall God be said to have made something ill, when he made the water pernicious to men, the air to fishes? And this also shows the natural and unavoidable necessity of evil in the world; because all creatures being imperfect and limited, they must likewise have limited and different appetites, and consequently proper and peculiar objects suited to their several appetites: when therefore the object proper to one appetite happens to be applied to the contrary, it is impossible but it should be incon-

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* C. 3. Par. 3.

For he that is determined *ab extra* to do any thing, acts by necessity; he is passive, and must necessarily

N O T E S.

gruous to it, that is, evil. Nor is it possible in a world, where all things are and must necessarily be in a continual flux, and every animal changing its situation, as it is in the material world, but such misapplication of objects to appetites should happen; and therefore evils are necessary in it; and either God must have made no such world, or permitted some such evils in it. There is no way of conceiving how the present world could have been bettered, but either by making more creatures, or 2dly, more variety, or 3dly, giving the creatures that are made more and stronger appetites: for the good and satisfaction of a creature is always proportionable to the strength of the appetite, with which it enjoys its object. But it plainly appears that in any of these three ways as there may be more good, so there will be more evil in the world: for creatures being multiplied, the necessity of clashing of appetites, and the hazard of misapplication of objects will be the greater; and the greater variety, still the greater danger and difficulty to avoid disagreeable objects, and the harder always to find agreeable: as the greater the croud, the harder it is to meet one's friends: and lastly, the increasing the appetites could no ways contribute to the sure discovery of proper objects; the disappointment would be the more intolerable, the more vigorous we conceive the appetite; and the greater number of appetites, the more liable would they be to continual disappointment. But to return, As there is no *best* in nature, or in the divine intellect antecedent to the divine will, which can be supposed to determine that will to create one world rather than another: so in the second place, there is no world so good, but infinite worlds may be conceived possible in all respects as good as it. Good then being relative to appetite, that is to be reckoned the best creature by us, which has the strongest appetites and the surest means of satisfying them. And though the substance in creatures is chiefly to be regarded as contributing to their perfection, yet we have no way of measuring the perfection of the several substances but by their qualities, that is by their appetites, whereby they become sensible of good and evil, and by their powers, whereby they are able to procure those objects whence they receive that sense of things which makes them happy.

It is plain therefore that whatever system we suppose in nature, God might have made another equal to it, his infinite wisdom and power being able to make other creatures equal in every respect to any we know, and to give them equal or stronger appetites, and as certain or more certain ways of satisfying them. We see in many cases that very different means will answer the same end. For example, a certain number of regular pyramids will fill a space, and yet irregular ones will do it as well, if what we take

from

necessarily both do and suffer, not what he himself, but what the determining cause has effected
in

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from the one be added to another; and the same thing may be done by bodies of the most irregular and different figures in the same manner: and therefore we may very well conceive that the answering of appetites, which is all the natural good that is in the world, may as well be obtained in another system as in this, if we do but suppose that where their appetites are changed, the objects are also suited to them, and an equal agreeableness among the parts of the whole introduced; and in an infinite number of possible worlds I do not see why this may not be done in infinite ways by infinite power and wisdom.

If then it be acknowledged that there might have been infinite other worlds, or even but one, equal to this in all respects as to goodness, there could be no obligation in nature on God to create one rather than the other, and therefore nothing could make one more agreeable to him, that is, better, than another but his choice. We must either own that there could be no such world at all, or that God must for ever deliberate which of the possible worlds he should choose; or else his determination must proceed from his own arbitrary choice, and he must be allowed the liberty to please himself by choosing.

In short, it is easy to see that men who propose such schemes would drive all liberty out of the world, and pin down God in all his actions to a fatal necessity. They allow no cause but what is necessarily either agent or patient, which if it be to allow a God, it is such an one as is a mere machine, and can neither help himself nor his adorers. It is plain if this were so, there could be no such thing as moral good or evil in the world, the very essence and idea of it is lost, and we should be no more obliged to a God that acts necessarily for the good we receive from him, than we are to the sun for the benefit of its light and heat.

I know it is urged that where there is no external motive to determine the will, there only *chance* must do it, which is to admit an effect without a cause. I answer, that it is the nature of a free agent to be the cause of its own actions, without being impelled by any thing without itself. The choosing a thing gives it the goodness to this being, and it chooses a thing, not because it was antecedently an object apt to please it, but because it intends to *make* it so. When it is objected that such an agent chooses without reason; I answer, itself is the reason to itself of its acting; that is, it acts to exercise its faculties, the exercise of which causes the sense of pleasure; and where there are several ways of exercising its faculties and all indifferent, to show the dominion over its own actions, that is its liberty, it takes the way it chooses; nor is it reasonable to expect it should lie idle till it
find

in him: but this goodness (which is supposed to be in things antecedent to the divine election, and to determine it) is somewhat external, with regard to the will of God; if therefore that be the cause which determines the election, it follows that the act of election and every thing that depends upon it is necessary.

But if things are good because he has chosen to make them, his whole work will be free.

VII. But if things be good and agreeable to God for this only reason because he has chosen to make them so, he himself will be at liberty, his whole work will be free. The world will be made not of necessity, but choice; nor will it be impossible to be effected, though it be in itself unprofitable to the deity; for he will have a complacency in his own choice. And from hence it sufficiently appears of how great importance it is,

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find a reason why it should act one way rather than another, when in truth there is no such reason, the objects being to the agent absolutely indifferent; and therefore amongst infinite possible worlds, there was no reason possible or imaginable to determine God to make this rather than any other, beside his own will.

If it be asked, is there then nothing good or evil in respect of God? I answer there is, *viz.* the acts of his own will; they please him, and whilst that will continues, every thing which crosses it, or tends that way, is evil or displeasing to him. Thus it is his will that we should have freedom of choice in many things; and he has set certain limits to our choice to prevent our hurting ourselves or others by choosing amiss. Therefore it would be contrary to our nature to take away the use of free-will from us; and since it is his will to give us such a nature, it is likewise his will to continue the use of our freedom: it would likewise be contrary to the will of God for us to use our freedom to mischieve ourselves or others, and therefore we conceive that every one who thus misuses his freedom incurs the displeasure of God.

But then it is plain that in all acts which we conceive to be pleasing or displeasing to the Deity, we derive the reason of their being so from the consideration of their agreeableness or opposition to his will: and we derive the knowledge of that will from nothing but the manifestation God has made of it, either by the nature that he has been pleased to give the creatures, or else by revelation. So that after all, we have no measure of good or evil, but the will of God.

is, that all the goodness of the creatures should depend on the divine election, and not that upon the goodness of them; for so we may conceive fate to be taken away and liberty established.

VIII. Fifthly, If he expected no advantage, you will say, from the objects of his choice, why should he choose them? Is it not more probable that he should do nothing at all, than busy himself in things that are like to be of no benefit? I answer, that it is no more trouble to him to will things than not to will them; and hence it comes to pass that when he wills them, they exist; when he retracts that will, they drop into nothing. Which reason, as it supposes an indifference of things in respect of God, so it asserts his liberty to produce or not produce them, and proves that that will be agreeable to him which he shall choose. But we have a better yet at hand, *viz.* that God chose to create external things that there might be something for him to delight in without himself. For every one receives satisfaction from the exercise of his powers and faculties. (52.) Now

External things are in themselves absolutely indifferent to God, but he has a complacency in his choice.

X

God

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(52.) This reason is very consistent with what our author had delivered in C. 1. § 3. par. 9, 10. where he asserted that the end and intent of God in creating the world, was to exercise his several attributes, or (which is the same thing) to communicate his perfections to some other beings: which exercise or communication could proceed from no other cause beside his own free choice; and therefore he must be absolutely and physically indifferent to it, in the same respect as man was shewn to be indifferent towards any action * only with this disparity, that man, as a weak imperfect agent, may easily be imagined to will absurdities or contradictions; but God cannot be supposed to will or act either inconsistently with his nature and perfections, or with any for-

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* See Note 45, and 49. and *Ode. Theol. Nat.* p. 246.

God is invested with infinite power, which he can exercise innumerable ways; not all at once indeed,

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inter volitionem (as our author observes in the 12th and following paragraphs) and consequently cannot be said to be indifferent to such things (as some have misunderstood our author) any more than he is indifferent towards being what he is. *Leibnitz* objects † that it could not be in any sense indifferent to God whether he created external things or not, since his Goodness was the cause (according to our author himself in the place above cited) which determined him to the creation. But what do we mean by his *goodness* here? Is it any thing more than an intent to exercise his attributes, or an inclination to communicate his happiness or perfection? And is not this the very determination or election we are speaking of? To say then that God is determined by his goodness, is saying that he determines himself; that he does a thing because he is inclined to do it; it is assigning his will and inclination for a cause of his action; which is no more than we contend for. Whereas they that would oppose us should assign a *cause* for that will or inclination itself, and shew a *natural* necessity for the operation of the divine attributes (for a *moral* one is nothing to the present question) a strict physical connection between the existence of certain natural perfections in the Deity and their exercise on outward objects. But if God had no other reason for the creation of any thing beside his own goodness, he was perfectly free and naturally indifferent, to create or not create that thing; and if he willed, or was inclined to exert his perfections thus freely, he must be as free and indifferent still in the actual exercise of them. Nor will it from hence follow (as *Leibnitz* objects) that there is such an absolute indifference in the Deity as must make him regardless whether the world were well or ill made; mankind happy or miserable, &c. For if the communication of happiness be the sole end of his acting, whenever he does act he must propose that end, and the exercise of his several attributes will lead directly to it. Knowledge, power and freedom are *perfections*, i. e. the foundation of *happiness* to the being possessed of them; and therefore when communicated to other beings they must produce that happiness, which is founded in and naturally results from them: to suppose the contrary, is the same absurdity as to suppose that knowledge may produce ignorance, power weakness, or freedom necessity.—The communication of these attributes then, or the exercise of these perfections united, will constitute a wise, good and holy providence pursuing a good end by fit and proper means. All which is included (as our author says) in the very *first act* of the deity, or rather in his will to act at all; and to suppose him to will or act in any respect

contrary

† *Remarques*, p. 473.

deed, (for all are not consistent with each other) but such as are consistent are for the most part indifferent,

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contrary to this; is supposing him to will and act against his own nature, and in contradiction to himself; or, which is the same, imagining an effect to be quite different from, or contrary to its cause. The *moral* perfections of the deity are therefore immediate consequences, or rather the genuine exercise, of his natural ones. And thus, I think, it may be shewn how all the actions of the deity must certainly be good, wise, &c. without recurring to any such *finesses*, or *relations* of things as are by some unaccountably supposed to be *antecedent* and absolutely *necessary* to the determination of the will of God himself.

But do not we, when we speak of God's choosing fit and proper means, evidently suppose that some things are in themselves good and eligible, and *vice versa*, even before any determination of the deity about them? where is the room for wisdom and preference in God, if all things be alike and indifferent to him? I answer, first, if by things being in themselves evil, &c. be only meant, that some particular ways of acting may be conceived, which would, if the deity could be supposed to will them, be necessarily and essentially opposite, and have a tendency directly contrary to his present method of acting; we grant that some such things may be imagined: but then it will be an absurd and impossible supposition that God should ever will them; as he has already willed the contrary; and therefore, in regard to him, they must still be only imaginary. Nay, they would be so far from being independent of, or antecedent to the will of God in any sense, that the very essence and idea of them would proceed entirely from, and pre-suppose its determination; since we can only conceive any relations or consequences of things to be good or evil, so far as they are consistent with, or contrary to the present system pre-established by the will of God. I answer in the second place, that the primary intent of the Creator being, as was shewn above, to communicate his perfections to various creatures (to which communication he was nevertheless absolutely free and indifferent, and therefore could be determined to it by no external cause) while that intent continues, the necessary consequence of it is, that creatures be so made and constituted as to attain that end; and endowed with such powers as will make them resemble him, as much as possible, in their several states and orders. All this is only prosecuting the same volition, or continuing to communicate *himself*; and what we mean by choosing fit and proper means for this, is only, that he is not a blind and unintelligent agent, but conscious of his own nature and operations, and therefore able to act in a certain settled determinate manner. Now such determinate action must produce a regular system, the several parts whereof will be related to and connected with each other, and by a mutual

indifferent, nor is there any reason why he should prefer one before another,† it must therefore be his

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dependency rendered subservient to the good and perfection of the whole. Though this whole system might at first perhaps be indifferent to the agent in regard to several other systems equally possible, and which might have been made equally perfect in its stead.* It is not then as *Leibnitz* argues † the natural and necessary goodness of some particular things *represented by the divine ideas* which determines God to prefer them to all others, if understood of his *first* act of producing them; but it is his own free choice, which among many equal possibilities, makes some things *actually* good, and determines them into existence. When these are once supposed to exist, every thing or action becomes *good* which tends to their happiness and preservation. Hence also in respect to *us*, certain consequences and relations arise, which, by the very frame of our nature and constitution, we are directed to approve, and obliged to pursue, if we expect to be happy. And thus all *moral obligation* is ultimately referred to the *will of God*, which seems to be the only sure and adequate foundation of it, and from which I think it may be deduced with much more clearness and consistency than from that *hypothetical necessity* of the relations of things, which evidently pre-supposes, as was observed before, and is itself only founded on the will of God.†

Give me leave to add here, that their argument seems to be of very little force against our author, who urge, that if all good and evil depend upon the *arbitrary will* of God, then it would not be impossible for God to will that vice be virtue, that two and two make five, &c. For allowing that God at first made all things, what they are, and still continues to them the same existence, (though perhaps no reason *a priori* can be assigned why he made them at all, or in this rather than some other manner) vice must be vice, &c. that is, while things are as they are, the same consequences and relations will result from them; and to suppose the contrary, is to suppose that things may be different, or have different consequences, while they continue the same; or that they may be what they are and what they are not at the same time. Thus all the present *relations* are evidently *subsequent* to the present order of nature, and must continue with it; and this consequential necessity is all the *fitness* that I know of.

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* See note 2.

† *Remarques*, p. 447.

† See the *preliminary dissertation*, and R. i. or Pufendorf, of the law of nature and nations, B. 1. C. 1. § 4. Note 7. and B. 2, C. 3. § 20.

† Instances of this indifference may be seen in our author's note, B, and the 5th precedent paragraph.

his own choice which makes one more agreeable than another; nor is it otherwise conceivable how

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To stile this *eternal* and *immutable* can therefore only mean thus much, *viz.* suppose things to be at any time what they now are, and at the same time the very same consequences would flow from them which we now find. Suppose a set of beings constituted like ourselves, and framed with the like capacities for happiness, and the same relative duties must be incumbent on them in order to attain that happiness. If they be imperfect, dependent creatures, and perpetually standing in need of each others assistance; if also they have such passions, and inclinations as tend to unite them to each other, and oblige them to act in concert: if they be thus framed, I say, they will of consequence be thus related, and subject to all the moral obligations which *we* now are. But still this necessity is only hypotheticalal, and like the necessity of any certain consequence resulting from certain premises; which premises being altered, a different, or a contrary one will be equally necessary. Thus in the former instance, if any rational creatures be constituted social beings, they will indeed be obliged to act as such; but let some be made independant of each other, and unsociable; endowed with, or so made as necessarily to *acquire*, passions and inclinations opposite to the former; and their duties will be the reverse. The great virtue of *selfishness* will then occupy the place of *universal benevolence*, and that method of life produce the greatest sum of happiness to each individual, and consequently be the most eligible to every one, which has now the direct contrary effect. If such a supposition be conceivable, it is sufficient to shew that these relations are not *absolutely necessary in themselves*, but only conditionally and consequentially to the present order of the creation †

Upon a farther enquiry into the doctrine of *abstract fitnesses* and *eternal reasons* of things, I find a great many persons very much perplexed about them, who cannot apprehend but that they must necessarily determine the duty in all cases, as well as absolutely oblige mankind, nay are the only ground of moral obligation. I shall therefore endeavour to explain myself more fully on this subject, which appears to me in the following light.

From all eternity God had in his mind the ideas of all things, which could possibly exist either separately or together. He saw that several systems of beings might be created, the result of which would be several kinds and degrees of happiness or misery to these beings (though it is impossible to suppose any absolutely highest

† See *Pufendorf*, B. 1. C. 2. §. 6. and the Note 2. p. 20. or B. 2. C. 3. §. 4, 5. and the notes *Q. R.* See also *Felton's* preface to his *L. Moyer's* lecture, p. 18. and p. 34.—51. &c.

how a thing that is in itself indifferent to the elector, should prove more pleasing than any thing else.

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highest degree, since that would be a limitation of infinite power.) As these various possible systems were at once present to his view, he saw the several *relations*, which the beings in them would have to each other, or to themselves in different circumstances, supposing them to be formed in any given manner; he knew also how to suit the condition of these beings to their relations, so as to produce a certain sum of happiness or misery from the composition. If we enquire whether of these two kinds of creatures he shall choose, we can find no natural necessity to determine him, since he is absolutely independent and completely happy in himself without any creation at all; nor can his happiness be increased or impaired by the happiness or misery of his creatures. We must therefore have recourse to his own free pleasure, directed by his other attributes, for the only cause, ground, or reason of his works. If he be a benevolent being, and have perfect knowledge and power, he will frame the world in such a manner, and so suit every circumstance to each condition as to produce universal good; if malevolent, the contrary.

But from a view of the present system we find that happiness, beauty, order, are prepollent; and that no good has been omitted, which could have been bestowed consistently with the happiness of the whole. Hence we gather that he must be absolutely good, or that he will act upon such reasons, and produce beings which have such relations to each other, that the result of all shall be happiness in the main. These reasons and relations we call *good*, which have this beneficial tendency to the whole system; and what we mean by his being *determined* by them, is that his goodness always inclines him to promote the happiness of his creatures, and his knowledge represents to him the most proper means of effecting it. *Why* he is good, or inclined to act in this manner, we know not, any more than why he is intelligent; nor do we think a reason *a priori* can be given, or ought to be expected for either of these attributes.

But thus much seems evident, that unless he was previously so inclined, a prospect of these reasons and relations could never determine him; since, as was observed above, he is absolutely independent, and incapable of being affected by them: all the goodness which results from them can be no good or benefit to him, and consequently he cannot be obliged to pursue them by any other necessity than a *moral* or *hypothetical* one, *i. e.* one that is founded on the previous supposition of what we call his *goodness*. It is their being agreeable to this divine attribute, or rather the ways in which it is exerted; their being the most proper means

IX. Neither ought we to enquire for any reason of the election, *i. e.* why he chooses this rather than And determines himself to action.

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to the best end, or productive of the greatest universal happiness, which denominates them *fit, right, &c.* and what we must either mean by these words, or we can, I think, have no distinct ideas of them.

Thus much concerning these relations with regard to the Deity, but though we may not comprehend the nature of a self-existent being, or the manner of his acting, nor see in what sense he is determined, obliged, or under a necessity to act agreeably to all such *relations*: as a system of things will have to one another's happiness (nor indeed is it of any use, nor can it have any meaning, farther than knowing that he is permanently good) yet with respect to their constituting a *law of nature*, and our deducing *moral obligation* from them, I think the case is very clear. As we are made sensible beings, or capable of happiness and misery, nothing can be a law to our nature but what produces the one and prevents the other; and as we are endowed with freedom of will, we can never be under any other sort of *obligation*. To find out the tendency of things to this great end, is the province of *reason*; and all that we can mean by terming one thing more *reasonable* than another is its superior tendency to *happiness* on the whole, which is, and ought to be, the ultimate end of all truly rational dependent beings.

Can *man*, for instance, have any reason to pursue that which does not at all relate to him? and does any thing relate to him of concern him, which has no relation to his happiness? as therefore we have our happiness to seek in a great measure from without, and have no innate instinct or implanted appetite, to direct us in the search; no truly natural passion or affection in which it consists, (as may be easily gathered from Mr. *Locke's* history of the human mind) it will be the part of pure reason to discover the means of obtaining it, and these means will be the doing such actions, and acquiring such habits of mind as are suitable to our dependent state, *i. e.* such as tend to oblige all those other rational beings on whom we are dependent; such as engage the good will and affections of all those who have it in their power to promote or impede our happiness; and more especially that supreme being on whom we depend absolutely, and who is able to make us happy or miserable to all eternity. And as the only means of engaging the good will of all our fellow creatures with whom we are or may be concerned, is the manifesting a disposition to promote their happiness; which is at the same time complying with the will of our Creator, who intends nothing but the common good of us all; and requires that we should co-operate with him by our joint endeavour to promote it; so it is evident that all such actions and dispositions

than that; for upon supposition that there is a reason the indifference would be destroyed, and the election would not be free. If we suppose that there is such a thing as better and worse in the objects themselves, who would affirm that the goodness and wisdom of God will not necessarily determine him to choose the better? for who can honestly postpone the better and prefer the worse? as then in indifferent matters there can be no reason why one is chosen before another, so there is no need of any: for since the divine will is self-active, and must necessarily be determined to one of the indifferent things, it is its own reason of action, and determines itself freely. Nay, so great is the power of God, that
whatever

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dispositions of mind as have this tendency, are *duties* to us, the discharge of which will either be attended with happiness by natural consequence in this life, or by the positive reward of God in another.—From this sense of the reason or relation of things (which, as was observed before, is all that can give them any relation to us, or afford any reason for our observing them) we may easily deduce a compleat scheme of duty which must be *always* obligatory, and will appear so to all beings of the like nature with ourselves. This, if we please, may be termed absolutely *fit, right* and *reasonable*; provided that we keep the true reason and end of all in view, *viz.* our own *happiness*; and do it in *obedience* to the *deity*, who alone can secure this main end to us, and who can only be engaged to this by our performing every thing on his account. If on the other hand we follow virtue for its own sake, its native beauty or intrinsic goodness, we lose the true idea of it; we mistake the means for the end: and though we may indeed qualify ourselves for an extraordinary reward from God for such a state of mind, yet we do really nothing to *entitle* ourselves to it: if we attain the good effects of every virtue in this life, *we have our reward*; if we do not, what claim have we to any amends from God, whom we have never thought of in it, and consequently whose *servants* we cannot be said to be? the only principle which can in reason recommend us to *his* favour, must be the *doing all things to his glory*, in obedience to *his* will, or in order to please *him*. Obedience to God is the *principle*, the good of mankind the *matter*, our own happiness the *end*, of all that is properly termed moral *virtue*.

whatever he shall choose out of infinite possibilities, that will be the best; it is all one therefore which he prefers.

X. Sixthly, But you urge that you are still unsatisfied how a power can *determine itself*, i. e. you are ignorant of the *Modus*; but a thing must not be denied because we do not know the manner how it is done: we are entirely ignorant how the rays of the sun produce the idea of light in the mind by moving the optic nerves; nor is it better understood how the members of the body can be moved by a thought of the mind, and at the direction of the will. Yet no body denies these things, because he knows not the manner in which they are performed. If therefore it be manifest that the divine will does determine itself, we shall not trouble ourselves much in enquiring how it can be done.

The difficulty of conceiving how a power can determine itself to action ought not to hinder our assent to the truth of the proposition.

XI. But to confess the truth, it is no less difficult to conceive a thing to be moved or determined by another, than by itself; but as we are accustomed to material agents,* all which are passive in their operations, we are certain of the fact, and not at all solicitous about the manner of it: whereas if we consider the thing thoroughly, we shall find ourselves as far from apprehending how motion is communicated from one body to another, as how the will can move itself: but there seems to be nothing wonderful in the one, because it is observed to happen at all times, and in every action; whereas the other is looked upon as incredible, since it is seldom performed, viz. by the will alone. And tho' both reason and experience prove that it is done, yet we suspect ourselves to be imposed upon, because

It is as difficult to conceive how a thing can be moved by another, as by itself: we are prejudiced by being accustomed to material, i. e. passive Agents.

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we know not the manner of it. The ground of the mistake is this, that since the will is the only active power which we are acquainted with, the rest being all passive, we are not easily induced to believe it to be really such, but form our judgment of it from a comparison with other agents, which since they do not move but as they are moved, we require a mover also in the will of God: which is very absurd; since it is evident that if there were no *active* power in nature, there could not be a *passive* one; and if nothing could move without a mover, there would have been no motion or action at all. * For we cannot conceive how it should begin. Now it is much harder to conceive how motion can be without a beginning, than how an agent can move itself. Since then here are difficulties on both sides, neither ought to be denied because the manner of it is above human understanding.

What is said about indifference, with respect to the will of God, takes place in his primary elections.

XII. It is to be observed, that what we have said concerning this indifference of things in regard to the divine will, takes place chiefly in those elections which we apprehend to be the *primary*, but not always in the subsequent ones. For supposing God to will any thing, while that election continues, he cannot reject either the same or any thing necessarily connected with it; for that would be to contradict himself. In order to apprehend my meaning the better, we must remember that the divine power can effect innumerable things equal in nature and perfections.

* See Dr. Clarke's *Demonstrat. of the D. Attributes.* pag. 82, 87, &c. or S. Hancourt's *Essay concerning Liberty*, &c. p. 28, 29. or Note 43.

tions. For instance, we may conceive numberless men equal to one another in all respects; and also numberless species of rational beings equally perfect: nothing but the will of God could determine which of these he should create first. But when it was determin'd to create man such as he now is, *i. e.* with the faculties, appetites, and integral parts which he consists of at present, it is impossible that God should will or choose any thing repugnant to human nature, while that election continues.

XIII. For when we conceive any thing proposed to the knowledge of God as fit to be done, he must also necessarily have under his eye, as it were at the same glance, all those things that are necessarily connected with it, or consequent thereupon to all eternity; and must will or reject them all by one simple act. If therefore he determined to create man, he must also be supposed to will that he should consist of a soul and body, that he should be furnish'd with reason and senses, and that his body should be subject to the general laws of matter: for all these things are evidently included in the choice to create man.

God may have all things at once in his view which are connected with the thing chosen, and either will or refuse them by one simple act.

XIV. Nay, this primary act of volition must be supposed to contain not only those things which have a necessary connection with what is chosen, but such things also as tend to promote its benefit and happiness, as far as they can be made consistent with the benefit of the whole. For since God is infinitely good, 'tis certain that he wills that his creatures should exist commodiously as much as that they should exist at all. He therefore will'd such things as are agreeable to the natures, and tend to preserve the constitutions

As he is of infinite goodness, he also wills the good of all things which he has determined to create, as far as is possible.

tutions of his creatures in the same election whereby he determin'd to create them.

When the world therefore is once made, it is impossible that those things should please him which tend to the confusion, &c. of his work.

XV. We have said before, that there is a double goodness in things, the first and principal is that which renders them well-pleasing to God, as they are conformable to his will: the other is that whereby they agree with one another, whereby they afford each other mutual assistance, whereby they promote the convenience, preservation and perfection of the whole: but both these proceed from the choice and will of God. For when the Deity had once determined to please himself in the creation and preservation of the world, he must be supposed at the same time to have willed all such things as contribute to the benefit and perfection of his work, otherwise he would have contradicted himself, and thereby been the cause of frustrating his own election. For he is now supposed to have chosen that there should be a world, that it should continue as long as he himself had determined, that every being should attain the end assigned to it, and all things act according to the nature he had given them, and conspire together to preserve and perfect the whole. It is impossible therefore that he should will the reverse of all this, or that such things should please him as tend to the disordering, maiming or destruction of his work. For 'tis impossible to conceive that he should choose the existence of things, and yet refuse the means necessary thereto.

When man is made of such a nature as requires him to be just, sober, &c. God is not at liberty not to will these things.

XVI. When therefore man was made what he is, by that very act of constituting him of such a nature and condition, 'tis plain, that God also willed that he should be pious, sober, just and chaste.

chaste. (O) These and the like laws of nature then are immutable, *viz.* conformable to the will

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(O) Against this it is objected, First, That it makes God require those virtues from men, not because they are morally good, but because of the advantages which they bring by preventing such things as may trouble civil society or hurt a man's self. To this I answer that the author has shewed in his book that moral evil is founded on natural, and that in the state of nature, before revelation, men had no way to know what free acts were good or pleasing to God, but by observing what was advantageous to particular men, or to society. Observe all the laws of nature, and you will find them discovered and proved from this sole principle: As is manifest from all the books that treat of them. To pretend therefore that the natural mischiefs arising from vice do not prove them to be morally evil, is an uncommon way of thinking; since the very argument whereby we prove them morally evil is because they are pernicious.

But adly, From hence, say some, it follows that the turpitude of vices is not to be estimated from their own nature, but from the evils which attend them: as if effects did not flow from their cause, and those things which lead us into such evils as might have been avoided by abstaining from them were not properly evil; or that we ought to judge of the nature of any thing otherwise than from the properties and operations that necessarily attend it.

As to the *turpitude* of things, we give that appellation to such as seem contrary to the dignity and honour of a rational nature, which cannot be seen or heard without some nauseous abhorrence and reluctance of the senses.

We attribute it to vices by a kind of *analogy*, since they proceed from such principles as are unworthy of human nature, as lessen the value and esteem of him who has imbibed them, and make him as it were unclean and sordid, and the aversion of all good and modest persons.

But such turpitude as this does not arise from the nature of the things themselves, but from some sordid qualities that adhere to them and offend the senses. In like manner the turpitude of vices does not arise from the simple nature of actions, but from some adventitious circumstances, which bring evil on them, and as they are undue and heterogeneous, they as it were defile those actions to which they adhere.

It is be observed farther, that God can dispense with some actions which seem contrary to the law of nature, but not with others.

For instance, he commands *Abraham* to kill his innocent son, who prepares to obey, and if he had executed the divine command

will of God, and contained in the very first act of election wherein he determined to create man.

N O T E S.

he had done nothing amiss. And yet it seems contrary to the law of nature for a father to kill his innocent son. But as God is the giver and lord of life, reason tells us that he may take it away by whom he pleases.

But no man in his wits can believe that God may require any reasonable creature to hate him or disobey his commands, to be rebellious or perjured; or that any should take these for duties owing to God, tho' an angel from heaven should declare them to be so. What is the reason therefore why God commanded the first of these, and the father of the faithful was obedient; when we believe that neither God can command the latter, nor we be obliged to pay obedience to any who shall pretend such a command?

I think no other account is to be given of this difference than that the slaying a son is of such a nature as may be separated from all those evil consequences that attend wilful murder, whereas hatred of God, &c. are such as cannot; but naturally and necessarily lead those who are guilty of them into natural evils, and are prejudicial both to the authors themselves and others: They undermine the principles of all goodness; and dissolve the union between God and human Society, which from the very nature he has given mankind is necessary to human happiness: nor need we mention other natural evils, which would flow as certainly from the allowance or commission of the like crimes by natural consequence.

But 3dly, it is urged that this is to confound natural and moral evils, which all divines have hitherto distinguished. Answ. If the objector had but observed the distinction which the author gives of moral evil, chap. v. introduct. he might have found a full answer to this objection. There he might see that all evil is inconveniency, but that some inconveniencies arise from the series of natural causes without our consent and sometimes our knowledge; these we call natural evils; but others happen from the abuse of elections, when an undue choice occasions them, and in this case besides the natural evil that arises from them, there is likewise an obligation on the person that makes the choice to answer for the hurt he has done by it. Now these choices that bring inconveniencies, are called moral evils, and the difference between natural and moral evil is not but that they both bring inconveniencies, and hurt ourselves or others, (for therein consists the nature of their evil) but that the ill effects of the one proceed from the choice, those of the other from natural causes, and hence the author of that choice is answerable for the one, but no body for the other. Moral evil therefore is natural evil with choice superadded.

man. Nor is God at liberty not to will these during his purpose to continue man such as he is:

N O T E S.

But 4thly, It is alledged that moral evil is predominant in the world, and yet the work of God is not disturbed by it; vice has quite overwhelmed mankind, and yet they still subsist; which shews that God may very well command men to be impious, debauched, unjust, &c. without destroying the world, and therefore the author ought to hold that God is free as to his second elections as well as to the first.

If this objection prove any thing it proves that before revelation what we now call vices were not so, since at that time there was no way to distinguish vicious from virtuous actions, but by observing which hurt, or helped mankind, one of which nature taught them to cultivate, and to avoid the other. But if the actions we call vicious (such as murder, lust, injustice, contempt of God and irreligion) did no hurt, there was no reason why men should be debarred from them, or God be imagined to forbid them, before he declared his will to that purpose. But 2dly, It is a plain case that these and all other wicked and irreligious actions do mischief to mankind, and have a destructive influence according to their number, and if all men should give themselves up to them without restraint, mankind could not subsist. If self-murder were universal, there were an end of the human race: if none would take care of children, one age would put a period to the species. If all were false, treacherous and cruel, life would be short and comfortless; if there were no amity, society and justice, it would have the same effect. If lust and unnatural mixtures were practised as often as opportunity offered; if drunkenness, intemperance and excess were indulged to the utmost; mankind would starve, and the rest live a short uneasy life. This plainly shews that these vices are contrary to the nature of mankind, and therefore God who gave that nature has clearly enough signified that they are contrary to his will. It must be confessed indeed that there is much vice and wickedness in the world, and it is proportionably miserable; but yet take the actions of the worst of men, and you will find ten innocent, for one that is criminal or mischievous. For the truth of this I appeal to common experience. Let a person reckon the acts of any one man from morning to night, and he will find the proportion hold; and this is much more observable if we take the whole life of a man together; the proportion of innocent acts to the vicious will appear much greater; childhood and old age being much freer from mischievous acts than the middle part of life.

But lastly, It is urged that if these things be contrary to the will of God, he ought not only to have forbid them, but taken effectual care that they should not be practised.

I answer,

is: for by this means the same thing would please him, as being agreeable to his first choice of creating man, which is supposed to stand yet, and displease him, as being repugnant to another, which rejects the very same things that are contained in the first; that is, he would at the same time will and not will the same thing, which cannot be attributed to God.

This is no
bar to the
divine li-
berty.

XVII. Yet he is nevertheless free, because he cannot will that a man be perjured, a murderer, &c. for he is no otherwise determined than by his own choice; nor does a thing please or displease him on any other account than because it is agreeable or contrary to his will. For while that election of the Deity which constitutes me a man, (*i. e.* an animal that is obliged to be pious, just and sober) remains, 'tis impossible that he should will me to be perjured, or a murderer; nor can the latter choice take place, in God so long as the former stands, since it is repugnant to the former. When therefore we acknowledge that things are good, and assert that some actions are grateful to God, and others odious; this is not because we believe the divine elections to be determined by them, but because we suppose them to be comprehended in the very first

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I answer, God has taken effectual care to preserve men from these in such a degree, that our lives are secured as far as is expedient for the good of the whole. The frame of our natures is such, and the laws of God have so great effect upon us, that as I have already shewed, a thousand acts of justice, temperance, truth, charity and piety are done for one of the contrary vices. 'Tis the practise of these virtues that supports the world; and though many vices are permitted, yet, as shall be shewn in due time, there is none that could be prevented even by Omnipotence, without greater inconvenience.

First act of his will of creating things, and to be pleasing or displeasing to him so far as they are agreeable or opposite to that election. Nor is the liberty of God destroyed because he must necessarily will these things while he does will them: For every thing, while it is, necessarily is; but this necessity is consequent upon, and not antecedent to the divine will. The divine election therefore is not determined by the goodness of things, but the goodness and fitness of them arises from that election, and that is best for them which is most agreeable to that choice of the Deity whereby he will'd them to be what they are. From hence, I think, it appears sufficiently that God is such an agent as delights in things merely because they are chosen.

XVIII. Yet it is to be remarked that this self-determining power is not of such a nature as to imply infinite perfection; for it may be consistent with an imperfect understanding, and other appetites, as we have shewn before: It is not therefore peculiar to God, or incommunicable, there is no reason therefore for us to doubt whether a creature may partake of it: if God were pleased to communicate it, there seems to be no contradiction in the thing for a creature to be capable of it. Now that being which has this gift bestowed upon it, will manifestly be more noble than the rest, and a more perfect resemblance of the Deity: since therefore God has created the less perfect beings, we may, without any absurdity, believe that he has not omitted the more perfect. Let us see then whether

A being
endowed
with this
power is
more per-
fect than
one that
wants it:
yet this
does not
imply in-
finite per-
fection,
therefore
it is com-
municable.

ther there be any tokens of this power among the divine works *.

* For the possibility of such a power, and its being communicated, see Dr. Clarke's *Demonstr. of the Being and Attr. of God*, p. 82 and 85. 7th Edit. For the perfection of it, see note 81. and §. 2. of this Chapter.

S U B S E C T. V.

That Man partakes of the Principle of pleasing himself by Election.

I. **I**T appears, I think, from what has been said that there is such a principle in nature, and that it is also communicable. We are now to enquire whether nature has conferred it upon us: If we consult our own minds, we may possibly entertain a doubt whether we are always passive in our voluntary acts: namely, whether the goodness of objects determines our elections according to the degrees of it, which are, or are believed to be in them: or to speak more plainly, whether we always choose things because they please us, or seem convenient; or whether they sometimes appear indifferent in themselves, or inconvenient before the choice, and acquire their goodness from it, and are for this reason only agreeable because they are chosen. We have seen that there is in nature such a power as this, which can produce a convenience or goodness in things by willing them; but whether we partake of it or no is the doubt. Now that we do partake of it may I think be evinced from

Some reasons are offer'd to shew this.

from the following reasons. First, If we be conscious of an inherent liberty. Secondly, If we experience in ourselves those signs and properties which have been declared to attend this principle. Thirdly, If the causes which are supposed to determine the will be evidently insufficient, or arise from election instead of producing it.

II. As to the first; We experience in ourselves a principle of this kind, (*i. e.* a free one,) to such a degree of certainty, that if our minds be consulted we can hardly doubt of it; and from hence it is that all men of all nations, while they followed the guidance of nature, and attended to the perceptions of their own minds, have constantly asserted their liberty, at least in some particular actions: Nor has any one, unless he were forced to it, and as it were circumvented by Philosophical Subtilties, ever denied either that he was free, or that he could please himself in choosing one or other out of many objects presented to him, though that which was preferred were no ways preferable to others in respect of any intrinsic worth.

III. In this therefore, as in many other cases, the vulgar seem to be much wiser, and to reason more justly than philosophers. For the vulgar generally follow the natural sense of the mind; and though they be dull enough in forming long deductions, yet in such things as are the immediate objects of sense and experience, they are often more acute than philosophers themselves: who either puffed up with the vanity of appearing wise above the vulgar, or imposed upon by their own subtilty, often frame monsters of their own, and deny things that are the

First, experience.

The vulgar often judge better of matters of fact than philosophers.

most manifest : while they are striving to pursue truth through coverts impervious and inaccessible to human wit, they leave her behind their backs, and are blind in broad day. Hence some have denied motion, and others rest, others space, others all sense in brutes, others the being of a *God*, and others all manner of truth : and on the same account, some have denied liberty, *viz.* because they were not able to unravel the difficulties in which they themselves had involv'd it by their subtilties. The ignorant and unlearned do much better in flighting all such arguments, and judging of things ingenuously according to the dictate of their senses and experience ; and if their judgments be taken, we have clearly gained the cause ; for all these declare that they are conscious of this free principle within them, which yet cannot, as we have shewn, be well explained otherwise than we have done : The sense of our unprejudiced mind agrees with these, nor is the common testimony of mankind to be esteemed of little importance in a matter of fact (53).

IV. Secondly,

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(53.) It appears from daily experience, that this same self-detecting power is actually felt and acknowledged by the vulgar, which they describe by *having their will*, and often prefer the gratification of it to the most prudent counsels, finding this to be a *sufficient reason* or ground, for persisting in their choice, what consequence soever may attend it. The substance of all that *Leibnitz* * has urged against our author amounts to thus much, *viz.* That it is no proof of the non-existence of a thing, because the vulgar don't perceive it ; they are no judges of any thing but what is perceived by the senses ; they believe the air to be nothing when it is not moved : they knew nothing of the subtle fluid which causes gravity, or of the magnetic matter ; much less of immaterial

* *Remarques*, p. 477.

IV. Secondly, If we experience in ourselves the signs and properties which belong to this power, it cannot be questioned but we have the

It is proved that we mistake of this power because we discover the marks and properties of it in ourselves.

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immaterial substances: and therefore the several causes of action, the secret springs, the reasons and inclinations, may be all unknown to them, and yet we be absolutely determined (as he believes we always are) either by the constitution of our own bodies, or of those about us, or by a thousand little things which, upon due attention and reflection, we might be able to discover. We reply, that though in many cases our not perceiving a thing be no argument that it does not really exist, yet in some cases, in this particularly, it is. To feel no pain, to be conscious of no idea, is to have none; and in like manner to perceive no motive or reason of action, is the same as not to act upon any, or to perceive that we act without one. If any one (whether philosopher or peasant) be thinking upon a subject, he must, at that instant, know the subject that he is thinking on, or however, that he does think on something: 'tis likewise self evident, that every reasonable man, when he resolves upon some view, or follows an inclination, must be conscious of that view, or at least be sensible that his resolution was formed upon some view or other. In these cases therefore, and in all the modifications of thought, not to be and not to be perceived, is the very same thing.

But besides the absurdity of being influenced by a motive which we know nothing of; beside the impossibility of reconciling these imperceptible movers with any kind of liberty, (for which see note 45.) we reply, secondly that our author does not conclude against the existence of a thing because the vulgar do not perceive and take notice of it, but on the contrary, argues, that there must be such a thing as liberty of indifference, because they clearly perceive and experience it in themselves, or at least imagine that they do so; nay, because they have as great evidence of such a self determining power, as they have of any thing, even of their own existence; and consequently they must either be deceived in every thing, or not deceived in this *. The present argument is therefore built on matter of fact, and will be conclusive here, though our ignorance be ever so great in other cases. Our assurance of a truth which we do clearly perceive, is not the less for there being a great many other truths which we do not perceive: and though our not perceiving a thing were no argument that it does not exist, yet our actual perception of it is a demonstration that it does. It is not, therefore, because we do not consider the causes that communicate motion to the soul, or are not able to delineate the precise manner of that

* See note 38.

the power itself: now these are a self-consciousness that we are the true cause of our actions; an ability to act and please ourselves in contradicting our natural appetites, our senses and reason. If it be evident from experience that we can do these things, it will be but too certain that we have such a power as is able to please itself barely by election.

In the first place, we impute our actions to our selves, where by we own ourselves to be the true causes of them. Hence it is that we distinguish misfortunes from crimes.

V. In the first place then, we have declared that a being endowed with this principle is the only true efficient cause of its actions, and that whatever it does can be imputed to it only. Now all men impute the actions of their own will to themselves, and esteem them truly and properly theirs, whether they be good or bad; which is a certain sign that they do not perceive themselves to be determined from elsewhere to the choice or exertion of them, otherwise they would not look upon themselves as the cause, but the determiner. It cannot be otherwise than from a consciousness and firm persuasion of this truth, that wrong elections give us more trouble than such things as proceed from ignorance and inevitable error. It is on this account only that a light evil occasioned by our own choice grieves and afflicts us more than a very great one from the action of another. If we expose ourselves to poverty, disgrace, or an untimely

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that communication, that we assert the soul to be self-motive (as the author of the *Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity* argues. p. 13.) But we assert that it is self-motive, because we feel it to be so, and have as great evidence of it as we could expect, or conceive ourselves to have, were it really so. And that author unreasonably begs the question, in supposing that there are such causes and communicators in a case where he has, where he can have, no evidence at all of them.

untimely end, by an act of choice, our conscience remonstrates against it, remembrance stings us, and we cannot forgive ourselves, though we were secure both from human punishment and the wrath of God. But when the same evils befall us by external force or the necessity of nature, we bewail our condition indeed, and complain of fortune, but have none of that wounding anxiousness, and vindictive reproach of conscience, which scourges those that become miserable by their own fault. As therefore he that enjoys this principle must necessarily blame himself if he bring any inconvenience upon himself by his own choice; so he that does blame himself, demonstrates that he has this principle. For as it is impossible but that he should accuse himself, who believes that he is the true cause of his own misery; so on the other hand, it is certain that he who does accuse himself, thinks that he himself is the true cause of his misery: otherwise he would grieve, complain, and be angry with the person that compelled him to commit such things as he finds make him uneasy, but would never condemn himself as the cause and author of them, unless he were conscious that he could have hindered them. If the grief arising from a crime be distinct from that which is occasioned by a misfortune, it is plain that this can be on no other account, than because the crime proceeds from a free agent, *i. e.* one who determines himself to action, but the misfortune from a necessary one.

VI. It is plain then from our *conscience* of good and evil actions, that we have this active principle in some respect within us. For we not only rejoice

This is a most certain sign that we are conscious of our liberty.

rejoice in such things as are done well, and grieve at the contrary: but also impute them to ourselves, and either blame or applaud ourselves as the authors and true causes of them: which is the first and surest sign that our minds are sensible of their liberty, and that they could have pleased themselves in doing otherwise than they have done. (54.)

The second token of this power, that it can go against the appetites, &c.

VII. The second sign or property of this power is, that it is able to oppose the natural appetites, senses and reason, and can please itself in the opposition. If we experience this ability in ourselves, we may be certain that we partake of such a power,

VIII. With

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(54.) It is pleasant to observe how the author of the *Philosophical Enquiry* endeavours to answer this argument, by confounding the two ideas of sorrow and self-accusation; of a misfortune and a crime, as *Hobbs* had done before him. "Conscience (says he) being a man's own opinion of his actions, with relation to some rule, he may at the time of doing an action contrary to that rule, know that he *breaks* that rule, and consequently act with reluctance, though not sufficient to hinder the action. But after the action is over, he may not only judge his action to be contrary to that rule, but by the absence of the pleasure of the sin, and by finding himself obnoxious to shame, or by believing himself liable to punishment, he may really accuse himself; that is, he may condemn himself for having done it, be sorry he has done it, and wish it undone, because of the consequences that attend it." * Where, not to insist upon the perpetual abuse of the words, *do*, *act*, &c. which upon this hypothesis must have a signification directly opposite to that which they now commonly bear; what can we mean by a man's accusing or condemning himself, when he is sensible that he has done nothing which he could have altered or avoided; or rather done nothing at all, but only *suffered* all the while from some other being. He may indeed perceive and judge himself to be miserable, and be sorry that he is so, and wish himself otherwise; but what is all this to a criminal shame, remorse and self-conviction? Is this all that we understand by a *guilty conscience*? Can he blame, reproach,

* *Philosophical Enquiry concerning Human Liberty*, p. 105, 106,

VIII. With respect to the natural appetites, we have said before, that this principle, when it happens to be joined with natural appetites in the same person, often runs counter to them, and pleases itself in restraining them; if we find that we can do this, it is a sign that we have it. But who has not experienced this in 'himself? who has not sometimes voluntarily suffered such things as are hard, incommodious, and painful to the natural appetites, and taken delight in such

It is shewn that we can do this in regard to our appetites.

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or be angry with himself for being only what another made him, and what he knows he could not possibly help?

As this is matter of fact and experience, we appeal to the common sense of mankind, whether the ideas of guilt, remorse, &c. be not entirely different, and evidently distinguishable from these. The same holds with regard to our blame or accusation of another, as has been shewn at large by Bp. Bramhall, to whose *Castigations of T. Hobbs* I must refer this author. "I asked (says the Bishop †) why do we blame free agents, since no man blameth fire for burning cities, nor accuseth poison for destroying men. First, he returneth an answer, *We blame them because they do not please us.* Why? May a man blame every thing that doth not please his humour? Then I do not wonder that *T. Hobbs* is so apt to blame others without cause. So the scholar may blame his master for correcting him deservedly for his good. So he who hath a vitious stomach may blame healthful food. So a lethargical person may blame his best friend for endeavouring to save his life.—And now, having shot his bolt, he begins to examine the case, *whether blaming be any thing more than saying the thing blamed is ill or imperfect.* Yes, moral blame is much more; it is an imputation of a fault. If a man be born blind, or with one eye; we do not blame him for it: but if a man has lost his sight by his intemperance, we blame him justly. He enquireth, *May we not say a lame horse is lame?* Yes but you cannot blame the horse for it, if he was lamed by another, without his own fault. *May not a man say one is a fool or a knave (saith he) if he be so, though he could not help it?* If he made himself a sot, we may blame him; though, if he be a stark sot, we lose our labour. But if he were born

"a na-

† Subject. 3, par. 11. 12.

such sufferance, as a good superior to the gratification of the appetites? (55.) Nay the pain itself arising from the violence offered to these natural appetites, if we do but choose to bear it, becomes in a manner agreeable, which would otherwise be very irksome. From whence it is most apparent that this pleasure depends upon the choice; for while that continues it continues too; when that is changed, it is gone. Now such elections as these are made every day, and none can be so much a stranger to himself, as not to be conscious of them. (56.)

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"a natural idiot, it were both injurious and ridiculous to blame him for it. Where did he learn that *a man may be a knave and cannot help it*? or, that knavery is imposed inevitably upon a man without his own fault? He hath confessed formerly, that a *man ought not to be punished but for crimes*; the reason is the very same, that he should not be blamed for doing that which he could not possibly leave undone; no more than a servant whom his master had chained to a pillar, ought to be blamed for not waiting at his elbow. No chain is stronger than the chain of *fatal destiny* is supposed to be."

See the same author's Definitions of Liberty, Necessity, &c. with his defence of them, p. 756, &c. and his reply to all T. Hobbs's evasions (since transcribed by the author of the *Philosophical Enquiry*, p. 91, &c.) in his *Vindication*, p. 679, &c.

(55.) To this Leibnitz answers, "That it is only opposing or balancing one appetite with another. We sometimes bear inconveniencies, and we do it with pleasure, but this only by reason of some hope, or some satisfaction which is joined to the evil, and which surpasses it." We reply, if by hope be meant an expectation of some future good, it is plain that we can oppose and resist any natural appetite without any such expectation, as may be experienced when we please, in hunger, thirst, &c. The prospect of the bare pleasure of willing to do so, cannot be the good hoped for, since that is a sure attendant on every such volition; all the satisfaction then which appears to be joined with the evil, and to counterbalance it in any such cases, can only be the pleasure arising from the actual exertion of the self-moving power, which is the thing our author contends for. See the latter part of note 45.

(56.) It is a common and just observation, that men as well as children bear any labour or fatigue which they undertake voluntarily,

IX. It is to be observed farther, that we do not only embrace with pleasure such things as the appetites refuse, and reject such things as they desire, but alter, as it were, nature itself by an obstinate election, and make these appetites pursue what they naturally avoid, and fly what by nature they desire. And this takes place not only in appetites, but also in the objects of the senses. Some things are naturally unpleasant to them, some bitter, nauseous, deformed; yet these are made tolerable by the force of election, and by a change of the natural propensity, at length become delights*. On the contrary, what was sweet, beautiful, &c. being rejected by the will, becomes at length disagreeable. We could not possibly do this, if we had not a power of pleasing ourselves by other means than the agreement of objects to the appetites and senses. For whence comes it that such things as are sweet, comely, excellent, commodious; nay, all that are grateful to the appetites and senses should become irksome and offensive? On the contrary, whence is it that griefs, pains, torments, nay death itself should be agreeable when voluntarily undergone, unless from this principle which pleases itself in its election? If it be granted that we have such a principle, these things may easily be accounted for; since natural good may, by the power of it,

That we can do it also in our senses, and in a manner change the nature of things by an obstinate election.

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tarily, with half the uneasiness and grief which the very same thing would give them, if they were forced to undergo it; which cannot, I think, be accounted for, but upon our author's principle.

* See Locke's chapter of power, § 69. *Though all this may be effected by the sole power of election, and without the reasons which he there assigns for it.*

it, be changed into evil, and evil into good: for it has a good in itself superior to these, by means of which it can overcome and alter the nature of them: but that this cannot admit of any other explanation will be shewn below †.

What we can conquer not only our appetites and senses, but also our reason by the force of election.

X. These things are generally supposed to be done by the power and prescription of *reason*; and it is thought, that the will under its guidance embraces things disagreeable to the natural appetites and senses; I confess this sometimes is, and always ought to be done according to reason; for we have hinted above, that some regard should be had to these in elections; but very often the case is far otherwise. We have shewn before, that a power which is capable of pleasing itself in election, cannot be determined by reason; for the understanding depends upon it, rather than *it* upon the understanding. It is therefore the *third* mark and property of this power, that it can run counter, not only to *appetites* and *senses*, but also to *reason*. If we can do this, we must own to our sorrow, that we partake of it. But that we can, by the force of election, conquer not only the appetites and senses, but the understanding too, (P.) daily

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(P) It is objected that the will doth not indeed always follow the judgement of the understanding, because there are other motives that come from insensible perceptions and secret inclinations which determine it: but that it always follows the most advantageous representation of good and evil, which results from reasons, passions and inclinations, whether distinct or confused: and yet it is alledged that this is not contrary to liberty or contingency. For there are two kinds of necessity, one founded on a contradiction, *i. e.* the proposition affirming a thing to be includes such a necessity that it should be, as to make it a contradiction to say

† See the following section.

daily experience teaches; and we have reason to lament that it can be proved by so many instances

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say it might not be, the causes that produce it being necessary. The other kind is when there are sufficient causes to produce the effect, and such as will infallibly produce it, but there is no contradiction in saying they may not produce it. Though therefore he that understands perfectly all the causes and motives that concur to an event, must know the reasons why it comes to pass; and that those reasons were so sufficient that they prevailed certainly and infallibly; and the man that had such a representation of the prevailing good or evil of what he was to choose, was carried certainly and infallibly to the resolution he took; yet this is not necessarily, because it doth not imply a contradiction that he should have determined himself otherwise.

Licet enim nunquam quicquam eveniat quin ejus ratio reddi possit, neque ulla unquam datur indifferentia æquilibrij, cum potius semper sint quedam præparationes in causa agente concurrentibusq; quas aliqui prædeterminationes vocant; dicendum tamen est has determinationes esse tantum inclinantes, non necessitantes; ita ut semper aliqua indifferentia sive contingentia sit salva; nec tantus unquam in nobis appetitus est ut ex eo actus necessario sequatur. Nam quamdiu homo mentis compos est, etiamsi vehementissime ab ira, siti, vel simili causa stimuletur, semper tamen aliqua ratio sistendi impetum reperiri potest, & aliquando vel sola sufficit Cogitatio exercende libertatis & in affectus Dominij.

In answer to this, which seems the strength of what is objected against the author's notion of liberty, I desire these few things may be considered:

First, that it is not easy to comprehend this necessity of contradiction, which is inconsistent with liberty, or to distinguish it from that necessity which is only founded on conveniency, and yet never fails to succeed, because there is always a sufficient reason or cause to produce the effect.

adly, At this rate the effects of all natural causes would be free. For it is no contradiction to say the sun will not rise to morrow, but his rising is no more free on that account. And in truth I do not find that any propositions but those that concern metaphysical and abstract verities, are in this sense necessary. All the effects of natural causes have only a *positive* or hypothetical necessity, that depends on the will of God. Yet if we consider only the sun, and the part he has in raising himself, he cannot be said in any tolerable sense to be free in rising. And so if we consider all things given which are necessary to an action, either a man can in these circumstances forbear his action, or he cannot; if he can he is indifferent, for *positis omnibus ad agendum requisitis potest agere vel non agere*, which is the very definition of an indifferent,

stances that we please ourselves in elections contrary to the natural propensity of our senses and appetites

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different, free agent: if he cannot suspend the act, then is the necessity as great on him in these circumstances as on the sun to rise.

If it be said the case is different, because a man has understanding which is always ready to suggest to him new considerations to stop his actions. I answer, whence come these new considerations that alter the man's circumstances? If from the will, then it determines itself after all, and is not determined by any disposition, motive or reason from without: but if these considerations that change the will are independent of it, and arise from any external disposition, reason or inclination, he is no more free that is determined to his choice by these, than the sun is free to move when natural causes determine him to that motion.

Every one may not see all the chains and movements that lead him to his choice, but if the will be *passive* in its determination, they are as certain and infallible as if he were drawn with chains of adamant. And whereas it is said that the mere thought of exercising our freedom is sometimes sufficient to stay the importunity of all our passions and inclinations: I answer, if the will can cross all external causes which incline it to a determination, purely on this account, that it will exercise its liberty; then it is a clear case, the exercise of its liberty is a greater good to it than all other considerations, which is the very thing I plead for.

But 3dly, I ask how comes this consideration of exercising its liberty in its way? The understanding, you say, offers it. But is it without cause that it offers it; or could it have not offered it? If the cause be in the understanding, that is necessary, and could no more forbear offering it than the sun could forbear rising. But suppose this consideration offered, no matter how, can the will still reject it? If it can, we are as far from a determination as ever. For that rejecting must be either from the will itself, or some other cause, concerning which the same questions recur; and so on till we come at the first cause, God. In all which chain every link is necessarily connected with the next before it, and so according to the representation in poets, the fatal chain is tied to the chair of *Jupiter*. He, and he alone is accountable for all the good and ill of all sorts in the world. Nor doth it in the least help liberty or contingency that there is no contradiction in the propositions that relate to the being or not being of things; for as long as there is a chain of natural or moral causes that certainly and infallibly produce the effect, in which the will is absolutely passive, there is no more room for liberty in intelligent causes than in natural.

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appetites, and at the same time against the dictate of reason.

XI. We have seen an Atheist supported by the obstinacy of a perverse mind, enduring torments, This appears from instances.
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I know very well men do many things willingly, as beasts eat their food, and that some call this liberty and contingency; but they might as well call it an elephant or a horse. For if this were the question, whether men did things voluntarily and with a full inclination, nobody could question but they did: but it is plain when we ask whether a man be free or no, our meaning is whether he has a full power to do or not do any thing notwithstanding all previous conditions and circumstances, in which providence has placed him. Not that a man is always absolutely indifferent: for he may have reasons and inclinations that may by-pass him greatly one way; yet notwithstanding that by-pass, he has still a power to act against them all, and please himself in so doing.

It is plain to me that they who are against this true freedom must be possessed with an opinion that all things in nature are passive and acted on by others; which was expressly Mr. *Hobbs's* doctrine: and though they endeavour to distinguish themselves from his disciples, it is in vain; their sentiments come to the same thing as to necessity, and the same causes, reasons and arguments are produced by both; the conclusion also is the same, only the one calls that an absolute necessity, which the other calls necessity of convenience; that is of a thing's being, because there is sufficient reason to produce it. For the very reason by which he proves his necessity, is this of a *sufficient cause*. If the cause, says he, be sufficient, and all predispositions, conditions and qualifications requisite be present, the effect will certainly follow; which is true. If then the consent of the will be caused by something without itself, those conditions being present, it will necessarily follow. If it be not so caused; if it has a power in itself to act and make a thing good or bad, agreeable or disagreeable by its choice, it is plain that nothing external can determine it. This proves liberty, *a priori*. For if there be such a power it is evident that *positis omnibus extra se ad agendum requisitis, potest agere, aut non agere*. All that is pretended to determine it is the antecedent considerations of good or evil; but where the chief good expected arises from the determination itself, and is consequent to it, there it is impossible it should be determined by such considerations.

And this seems to me the true reason, why some are so angry at this new notion, as they call it, of things pleasing us because we choose them; since it utterly destroys their notion of a passive will determined only by antecedent views of good and evil, and
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confinement, and death itself, rather than abjure his beloved impiety. We have seen a great many persons voluntarily throwing away their fortunes, life and soul, lest they should be disappointed in a foolish

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demonstratively establishes freedom; therefore they treat it as a chimera.

But adly, It is urged that this is a power to choose without any motive, without any final or impulsive cause, which is a great imperfection. Answer, I deny that this is to choose without any motive or final cause. It is choosing indeed without any motive or cause which is foreign to the will; so that it does not depend in its operations on any external objects, but has the cause, motive and end of its actions in itself; and sure it is not the worse for being thus independent; it has a cause and end, even to please itself, and surely to have it in its own power to do so is far from an imperfection.

Suppose two men, one has sufficient to feed and cloath himself in his possession, the other is forced to go abroad and beg for both; and let any one judge which of them is in the most perfect or happy condition.

3dly, It is said it does not appear how pure indifference can contribute to happiness; on the contrary the more a faculty is indifferent the more must the person possessed of it be insensible of the good he enjoys. But sure those that raise such objections have either never read or little minded the book. If the author had taught that the faculty continued indifferent *after* the choice, there had been ground for such an objection; but on the contrary he holds that after the election is made, the will is as much attached to the thing chosen whilst the election continues, as the natural appetites are to their objects; and it enjoys it with as much, nay greater pleasure, and to such a degree that sometime it prefers the enjoyment of it to life. But the happiness lies in this, that it is not obliged to choose, and when it has chosen, if it can't enjoy the object of its choice, it may reject it again.

4thly, It is urged that such a faculty as this would render science useless, reduce all actions to mere chance, and leave us no measures or rules for them.

I cannot but wonder what should induce any one to bring such arguments. The case is this: Man is placed by God in a world where he is concerned with, and has relation to many objects; he has many appetites which he may gratify by the right enjoyment of these objects; he may meet with many disagreeable things in the course of affairs, and may employ himself in many things that in the end will prove impossible to compass; that may hurt his fellow creatures, or inroad on things forbidden him by his creator: To compre-
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a foolish choice. We have beheld not a few disregarding the intreaty of their friends, the advice of their relations, the dictates of their own mind; dangers, distresses, death, the wrath of God, and the pains of hell; in short, despising all that is good, or could appear to be so, when set in competition with such things as, exclusive of the goodness which they receive from election, are mere trifles and worth nothing at all; such as have no manner of good or pretence of good in them. There have been persons who knowingly, without any kind of hope, any kind of belief, have destroyed themselves and their relations, and yet were in their right mind and

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hend these he has an understanding given him, as well as a power to choose or refrain from any of them; but because his understanding is not infinite, and therefore he may often mistake; and it may so happen that the bars and limits assigned by God and nature may hinder him from enjoying what his natural appetites require, and his judgment sees would be most agreeable to him; therefore God has given him a power of choice, whereby he may make those things agreeable that would be otherwise, were he only to gratify his natural appetites. So that this power is superior to them all, and in a great measure commands them and their actions; insomuch that he finds a pleasure and satisfaction often in curbing and restraining them. Nay this faculty is of such force that it always carries its satisfaction with it; and tho' it cannot absolutely change the nature of the appetites, or make us not feel the natural evils that surround us, such as pain, torment, disappointment; yet by its exercise it raises us so much satisfaction as to make these tolerable, if not pleasing to us.

Now must not every one see that such a faculty as this acts on the greatest reason and for the best end; even to make all the actions of a man's life, as far as possible, pleasing to him? And doth it not appear that such a will needs plain and certain measures and the greatest prudence and judgment to act by; otherwise it may fall into impossible, absurd or wicked choices? It has been shown in the book what limits are assigned our wills by God and nature, and how necessary it is we should keep within them. In short the argument is as if one should alledge, a prince is absolute governor of his kingdom, and must not be controuled by his subjects, therefore he needs no counsellors; because he is not obliged to be determined by them. But sure the more absolute he is, the more need he has to prescribe good rules to himself, and advise with the best counsellors he can find, because he has it in his power to rule well, and none is to blame but himself if he do not. Whereas if he were to be determined by his counsellors, he would be under no such concern, since they, not he, would in all reason be answerable for his mistakes.

consistent with themselves, if a right mind may be judged of by sober words and a serious tenor of action. Did these men follow reason, or any other good beside the fruition of their choice? We have shewn already that this power may produce these and greater absurdities; for since it is supposed to be of such a nature as can please itself in its act, where ever it can exert that act, it can also please itself, even in opposition to the natural appetites, the senses and reason. If then such a principle be granted to be in us, it will not seem strange that we should be able to do things that are repugnant to these; if this be not allowed, it cannot be made appear how so many absurdities, so many things disagreeable to reason, to sense; so many things contrary to the dictate of the mind, should every day be committed by mankind.

That the understanding admits not only evil things for good, but falsities for truths viz. being under subjection to the will.

XII. Nay, which may seem more strange, the will appears to have so great a power over the understanding that the latter is so far subdued by its choice, as to take evil things for good, and forced to admit falsities for truths. Neither will this appear impossible to one who recollects that the senses are as much natural faculties, and have by nature as quick a relish of their proper objects, and can as well distinguish those that are agreeable from them that are disagreeable, as the understanding. If therefore we sometimes please ourselves in choosing what is repugnant to the senses, it is also possible for us to take pleasure in embracing what is dissonant to reason. The senses are forced to admit and tolerate such things as are disgustful to them, which things they take for agreeable by use, having as complete enjoyment of them as of those that are adapted to them by nature*. The same may happen sometimes to the

* Nay generally more so; it is a common observation, that such

the understanding, *viz.* to be compelled by the will to admit falsties for truths, to believe them thro' custom, and at last make use of them seriously as truths. Hence comes that common saying, *that we easily believe what we eagerly desire*; and some take a pleasure in subduing not only sense, but reason too. I confess; he that does this, acts foolishly and is much to blame; but from this very thing, that we act foolishly, that we are to blame, it is evident that we not only can, but actually do please ourselves in elections which are made contrary to reason; and that the judgment of our understanding depends upon the will, rather than that the will is determined by it. From hence it is evident that all the signs and properties of a power of pleasing itself by election agree to us, and therefore we certainly partake of it.

XIII. The same will appear, thirdly, from considering the reasons which move us to the choice of these absurdities, according to the opinion of those men who think that the will is *passive* in elections. For if, while they are labouring to assign reasons for these and the like determinations, they produce nothing for reasons but the very elections themselves, or their effects, it will be apparent that they are in a mistake, and offer effects for causes; which will appear more fully from an enumeration of those reasons which are supposed to move the will in such cases.

XIV. The principal of these reasons are *errors of the understanding, obstinacy of the mind, the force of passions, and madness*; on these are charged all the unreasonable, absurd, and impious actions of men; these are esteemed the causes of all such elections as cannot be allowed to proceed from

It is proved that we have this power from a consideration of those reasons which are supposed to determine the will.

Those are enumerated.

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the such things as were at first the most disagreeable of all to the palate, become by use the most delightful: *viz.* wines, tobacco, olives, &c.

the intrinsic goodness of the objects which are chose : but this is all groundless.

First errors of the understanding : these are shewn to depend upon depraved election rather than to cause it.

XV. For in the first place, as to *errors of the understanding*, it is certain that we sometimes choose hurtful objects by mistake, which we often lament, but never impute to ourselves, except we be conscious that the error was voluntary, *i. e.* in some respect owed its origin to election. Election then is prior to all culpable error, for that depends upon it. It is not therefore always by mistake that we choose absurdities, but by choosing absurdities we mistake the truth. But to confess the truth, we are hurried on in an absurd election, tho' we see and know all that we are about to do: if then there is any error, it is only this, that we judge it better to enjoy a free election, than to be exempt from natural evils. Hence it is evident that there arises so much pleasure from election as is able to impole upon the understanding, and induce it to prefer that to all kinds of natural good; nay to life itself. But whether this be done erroneously or wisely, it is the strongest argument that we have such an elective self-pleasing principle as this within us.

Secondly, obstinacy, which is shewn to be nothing else but persisting in a depraved election.

XVI. Secondly, as for *obstinacy*, by which they suppose that we are moved to choose absurd things; it is plain that this is nothing else but the perseverance of a bad election: neither can obstinacy and perverseness be explained otherwise than by elections. If it be granted that these things please us because they are chosen, we see clearly enough what obstinacy is, *viz.* an unnecessary adherence to an election, and a self-complacency in it, contrary to the dictate of reason, and with the loss of natural good. (57.) But if the will be determined from without

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(57.) *Leibnitz* (in his remarks frequently cited above) argues*
 " That obstinacy is not barely the continuance of a bad election,
 * Page 482. but,

out, there will be no such thing as obstinacy. By an obstinate person we only mean one that has continued a long time in a pernicious error, without any motive to change his judgment. Now he that does this is miserable indeed, but cannot be called in the least degree obstinate, according to the common notion of mankind.

XVII. Thirdly, since neither errors nor obstinacy are sufficient to explain the nature of these elections, they fly to the *power of the passions*; viz. the desire of fame or glory; anger, hatred, &c. These are the causes, say they, why we choose absurdly, and by them the choice is determined. But fame or glory have no manner

Thirdly, The violence of passions, viz. desire of fame and glory, &c. all which are proved to derive their in-

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“but a disposition to persevere in it, proceeding from some good that a man forms to himself, or from some evil which one supposes to attend the change. The first election, says he, was made perhaps thro’ mere levity, but the resolution of adhering to it comes from some stronger reasons or impressions.” But if this be all that is meant by obstinacy, how come the world to fix so bad a notion to that word? If it be a disposition always proceeding from a prospect of good, or dread of evil, and founded on second thoughts and stronger reasons; how can it ever be deemed a crime? Again, if the first election can be made without any external motive, (which he seems to allow by assigning *levity* as the sole cause of it) why may not the perseverance in it be so too? may not the same cause be supposed to produce the subsequent elections, as well as the first? In short, *Leibnitz*, after all his seeming opposition to our author on the head of liberty, most evidently grants the question both here, and p. 480. where he affirms, that in effect we are able to change the natures of things, and make these transformations abovementioned. “But this (says he) is not as among the *Fairies*, by a simple act of that magic power; but because a man darkens or suppresses in his mind, the representations of the good or ill qualities naturally joined to certain objects, and because we only regard those which are agreeable to our taste, or prepossessions; or even because we join by force of thought, certain qualities, which are only found united by accident, or by our customary way of considering them.” Now what is it to darken or suppress the representations of good or ill qualities,—to regard some only and neglect others, and to join qualities to objects by the force of thought, but to exert this very power in debate? Which often chooses the fruition, or even the consideration of some one out of many equal and indifferent objects, and by that simple act makes it agreeable to our taste, and joins such qualities to it as could neither proceed from chance nor custom, nor any association of ideas. See the conclusion of this subject in the following note.

of good in them, especially to those who believe that they shall not exist after death : why then are these men content to purchase glory with life ? Certainly from no other cause beside election ; it is by election that we have formed these idols to ourselves, and from thence they derive whatever good is in them. To be talked of after death, to mount upon the wings of fame, to extend our name to distant regions ; these things please us on no other account but because we will them. Obscurity, oblivion, retirement will be as pleasing to the man that chooses them, and have been so. Those persons then who imagine that these determine elections, take effects for causes. For these, which are nothing in themselves, shew us that they acquire so much goodness from election as makes them over-balance all kind of natural good.

The same
is shewn
of hatred,
love, &c.

XVIII. The same must be said of anger, hatred, love and despair, by which many are believed to be driven upon absurdities. But in reality all that is absurd and pernicious in these passions proceeds from election. Nature has given us passions which are generally innocent, while solicited only by their proper objects, and natural opportunity, as we see in brutes ; but they are compelled to change the natural objects by the power of election : thus anger and hatred are excited by the will, and applied not to such things as are naturally hurtful, nor love and desire to such as are naturally desirable, but to others of a quite different kind, with which they have no natural congruity, such as fame and glory after death. Of this kind also are most of the instruments of luxury, which are commonly said to please, purely by the strength of fancy, that is in reality, by election. Hence it is that men pursue with so great eagerness and emotion

emotion such things as are in themselves trifling, pernicious, and absurd. Nay they barter away life itself for trifles, and when they cannot enjoy them, cast off that in despair. It is the election itself which substitutes these things as fit to be prosecuted by these passions instead of their natural objects, and while they are hurried on, not according to the exigence of nature, but the command of the will, they confound every thing, transgress the bounds of reason and utility, and disregarding these rage without limits or restraint.

XIX. As for envy and revenge, they are not owing to nature but the will, and setting aside election are mere nothing. For whatever is pretended to the contrary, there can be no other account given why any one should undergo labours, dangers, griefs and difficulties; why he should lose his reputation, family, country, nay his life, for the satisfaction of his envy, or revenge, but that he resolved within himself, but that he *chose* to satisfy them. It is evident that the most unexperienced person is sufficiently convinced of this. But these, when once embraced by election, become more agreeable than those things which nature has made necessary. Those absurd elections then are not made by the force of these passions, but the absurd and irregular force of these flows from elections.

XX. They who perceive that these causes are insufficient, have recourse to *madness* and *phrenzy*, in order to account for absurd elections: but this is playing upon words, and taking madness in a different sense from that wherein it is commonly understood. He is looked upon as mad that is so far disordered in his mind as not to be able to deduce one idea from another, nor make observation upon what he sees: but these men who

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madness:
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do so many absurd things enjoy the abovementioned powers, and have their understanding and senses strong enough by nature : what is it therefore which drives them into absurdities ? The power and prevalence of the superior faculty, *viz.* the *will*, which has a good peculiar to itself, which it produces by election. This it pursues regardless of all that reason, the body, circumstances, appetites and natural faculties require. For while it can provide for and please itself, it is not at all solicitous about any thing which may prejudice these, but has a certain complacency in its own exercise, and endeavours to augment its happiness by the pursuit of such things as are repugnant to them, The more difficulties and absurdities it encounters, the more it applauds itself in a consciousness of its own abilities ; which seems to be the very thing that we call *vanity* and pride. Hereupon it compels the senses, reason, and natural appetites, to be subservient to its elections : nor can he be called a madman who acts against reason, through the force of a superior faculty, any more than he that falls from a precipice by the violence of a greater impulse. For it is not every one who acts against reason, that must immediately be looked upon as mad, but only he that acts absurdly from some injury done to the understanding faculty itself, or an impediment to the use of reason : he that could have followed the dictate of reason and yet knowingly violated it, must not be reckoned mad, but wicked, unless we will impose upon ourselves by changing the customary names of things.

All these things cannot be explained otherwise than by admitting a principle of this kind.

XXI. If it be granted that we have this superior faculty, it is plain enough that all these things may come to pass. For he that is endowed with it, will be able to please himself in
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the prosecution of his elections, even to the detriment of both body and mind; to the prejudice of senses, appetites and reason; which we often see done to our amazement; but unless we have this faculty imparted to us, it does not seem possible for us to create good to ourselves by election, and to prefer what is thus created to every natural good.

XXII. These things, I confess, ought not to be done; but if nothing could be done which ought not, there would be no such thing as a fault. As therefore much good arises from this principle, so there is this evil also, that by it crimes and follies are committed: And it has this inconvenience, that it can do what it ought not.

As much good arises from this principle, so it is attended with this evil, viz. a power of sinning.

XXIII. From these and other arguments which might be brought, I think it is evident that God has given us a principle of this kind, and that our will is only determined by itself. They are mistaken therefore who affirm that either the appetites, passions, or understanding, determine elections. What probably gave occasion to the mistake was, that other things please or displease us, beside what we choose, viz. such as are agreeable to the appetites or senses. Now it being observed that we have regard to these in elections, and do not choose any thing repugnant to them, but upon necessity, and that all men are of opinion, that the judgment of the understanding ought to be made use of in choosing, and being accustomed to this kind of choice, we become at last persuaded that it is absolutely necessary, and that our wills are always determined by some judgment of the understanding: at least, that it is a condition requisite in the

This mistake, that the will follows the judgment of the understanding, arose from hence, viz. that it is imprudent in us to act without consulting the understanding.

the object, that the mind judge the thing chosen to be good and agreeable to the appetites, Whereas the contrary to all this is generally true, *viz.* that the mind judges things to be good because we have willed them, because we have formed an appetite in ourselves by some antecedent election, and those things which we embrace by this *fallacious appetite*, as we may call it, give us equal pleasure with that which we desire by the necessity of nature.

We can act in order to shew our liberty, which is proved to be the same as acting without any reason at all.

XXIV. Nay, we choose objects which are contrary to all the appetites, contrary to reason, and destitute of all appearance of good, perhaps for this only reason, that we may assert our liberty of election. It is certain that every one can do this, and he that does it, proves by an experiment that he is free, and has a power of pleasing himself in election. Nor can he be said to be determined by the judgment of the understanding; for this reason is made by the mind itself, and may serve equally for every election, since it is drawn from the indifference of the will itself: and he who does any thing upon a reason which is made by himself, and is indifferent to either side, must be esteemed to act in the same manner as if he had done it without any reason at all. It is evident therefore that we have this power, and make use of the appetites and senses only as spies and informers; of reason as a counsellor; but that the will is master of itself, and creates pleasure for itself in objects by election (58.).

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(58.) Upon the whole, it appears that the true description of free-will must include thus much. A power of choosing or not choosing, or of choosing either side in any given case; naturally inde-

S E C T. II.

*Where it is shewn that Happiness consists in
Elections.*

I. FROM what has been said above, it appears The more that a Being endowed with a power of free any choosing is more excellent and perfect than one being is, that is without it: for that which neither acts the less he is exposed to motions from with- out, and meets with less incon- venience.

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independent of any mediate or immediate, external or internal force, compulsion, influence or necessity; physically determined neither by bodily sensations, appetites, &c. nor mental perceptions, reason, judgment. It is an ability of determining either among equal and indifferent objects, or of preferring the pursuit of some before others that are entirely different from or contrary to them; or lastly, of preferring the very consideration of some unknown objects, to all the rest; of deliberating upon, or attending to some particular ideas, and resolving to overlook others, though equally presented to the mind, and supposed to be of equal importance.

All this is contained in the very notion of a *self-moving power*; (though none perhaps have given so full and distinct an explanation of it as our author) for that which in strictness moves itself, is properly and physically independent of, and indifferent to all external movers, as long as it continues to do so; what is determined in certain circumstances by or according to particular sensations, motives, &c. and cannot possibly be determined either without or against them, is so far, and in such circumstances, only moved, acted upon, and purely passive. If then there be any such thing, properly speaking, as an active principle, it must be endowed with such an absolute indifference as our author supposes: and when we speak of the *strongest motives*, we do not mean such as have the greatest physical influence or weight in turning the balance of the will (since we suppose none of them to have any at all) but only such as the mind most commonly determines itself upon in fact; and to argue from such determinations that these motives must have such an influence both absolutely and comparatively, *i. e.* whether taken by themselves, or in opposition to each other, is manifestly to beg the question, and still to suppose that it cannot move or direct itself, notwithstanding our

nor is acted upon, is the farthest from perfection, since it is of no more use in nature than if it

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most evident perception and experience of the contrary. And that we have such experience, a little reflection on ourselves will convince us. "I think (says *Colliber*,) I may appeal to any confiding man, whether he be not in all ordinary cases sensible of an ability of darting his thoughts upon any particular object, even antecedently to any deliberation, and then, whether after deliberation about particular objects he cannot resume his deliberation, and sometimes vary his judgment; and whether, after the clearest judgment, and most deliberate choice of particular things or actions, he be not still conscious of a power of suspending his practice, of resuming the consideration of the objects whenever he pleases, or of immediately choosing or practising the contrary, without being determined by impressions from without, or impediments from within. But we have no clearer proof of our own existence than *consciousness*: and I conceive we need not expect greater evidence of any thing than we have of our existence."

If then our mind has such a power of selecting some particular ideas out of many perceived by the understanding, and attending to them alone without any previous apprehension of their nature and tendency, without any special reason, motive or inducement whatsoever to such particular choice; if the mind, I say, does in some cases exert such a power as this, then it is in these cases absolutely free. It cannot here be directed by the judgement, since it is supposed to act independently of it: nay it may be properly said sometimes to influence and direct, or rather to obstruct and subvert the judgement itself, for as much as it confines that to some particular objects only, and of consequence renders it partial, and precipitates it in the choice of these and withdraws others from it, which were absolutely necessary to a complete view of the subject, and an exact determination about it. Hence the spring of all errors, at least all criminal ones; hence vitious, absurd elections, and a labyrinth of woe. From the same power also duly apply'd proceeds the happy consciousness of desert, and in it is entirely founded all the reason of reward. It is usefulness then, and necessity, appear both for the establishment of morality, the ground of all rational happiness; and also, that we might always have wherein to please ourselves, which (as our author has shewn in the latter end of subject. 4.) otherwise we very often could not. Hence it appears I think sufficiently, that this power is one of our greatest perfections, though (like all other perfections that come short of infinity) it be liable to the greatest abuse, and so become capable of being turned into the worst of imperfections.

It

* *Impartial Enquiry*, &c. p. 42, 43. See also an *Essay on Consciousness*, p. 205, &c.

it were nothing at all; that which is purely passive in its operations is one degree more perfect, but

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It remains to be enquired with our author, whether all the happiness arising from it counterbalances the misery, and consequently, whether we and all other rational creatures might not have been as well or better without it. But for this see § 2. and 3.

We shall here only add a word or two in vindication of this principle against the three principal opposers of liberty above-mentioned. In the first place then, we do not assert that by this power the mind can choose evil *as evil*, or refuse good *as good*, i. e. that the former, as such, is or can be a *motive* for choice, or the latter for refusal: but we say that it can choose the one and refuse the other *without any particular motive at all*; (i. e. any drawn from the particular nature of the object chosen,) nay, in opposition to the strongest motive (*viz.* that motive which presents the greatest happiness, and which it usually does, and always ought to follow) purely by the force of its free, active or self-moving power. †

You will say it does this to prove its own power, and the pleasure attending such proof is the strongest motive in these cases. I answer, that granting this to be so (which yet is not very probable, as appears from what was observed from the *Essay on Conscientiousness* in note 45.) yet this, as our author observes, must be a motive of its own creating, which, with respect to volition, is the same as none at all. Nay this is the very thing we are endeavouring to prove, *viz.* that the soul has a power of determining to think or act, and of pleasing itself in such determination, without any other motive or reason but what is produced by itself, and follows that very determination; without any external cause whatsoever: in which power all its liberty consists, and the greatest part of its happiness, as will appear in the next section.

Nor secondly, will such a power as this make us only liable to mistake the true good which is in things (as the author of the *Philosoph. Enquiry* and *Leibnitz* argue) but on the contrary, it often makes true good or happiness in those things which of themselves had none at all; and improves those things which have, and alleviates those which have the contrary qualities; and of consequence is not an *imperfection*, but a very valuable and necessary perfection. Our author does not suppose us left to an absolute, blind indifference in all objects (as *Leibnitz* often urges) without any guide or direction in the choice of them; which would indeed be an imperfection: but affirms that the mind of *man* is sensibly and necessarily affected by some, and informed by his

† See Jackson's *Vindication of human Liberty*, p. 49, &c. or the beginning of E. Strutt's *Defence of Dr. Clarke's Notion*, &c.

but that which has the principle of its actions within itself, since it approaches, as it were, nearer to God, and is more independent, is also more *of itself*, i. e. it seems to be made for its own sake, and chiefly to respect its future benefit, and on that account to be more noble and perfect. Nor does it seem possible for a greater perfection to be communicated than the fruition of

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his understanding of the nature and effects of others, and so is sufficiently directed to the choice of these which are in themselves good and agreeable to his constitution, and *vice versa*; yet still with the reserve of a full power of following or not following that guide, of neglecting or refusing that direction: which power therefore, even in these cases, remains still unaffected. In other objects, he shews that the *man* is totally indifferent, which yet, by an arbitrary choice, he can make no less constituent parts of his happiness.

Whence, in the third place, a reply may be formed to the common question, *What benefit* is there in a power of choosing freely among things that are really indifferent, and exactly alike? We answer, the benefit of enjoying *any one* of them; which enjoyment a man could not possibly have without such a liberty, but must necessarily hang in perpetual suspense, without any choice at all: this *Leibnitz* owns to be an unavoidable consequence of his opinion* and to avoid this absurdity, is driven to a greater, *viz.* to deny that there are any such indifferent and equal things in nature † the contrary to which has been abundantly evinced already with respect to both God and Man.

Lastly, to the argument against the *possibility* of such a liberty, so frequently repeated by the two authors above mentioned, *viz.* that actions done without any motive, would be *effects* without a cause; we reply, in short, that it is a plain *petitio principii*, in supposing motives to be the real *physical efficient* causes (and these are the only causes which can concern the present question) of volition or action, which we deny; and yet are far from supposing these acts to be absolutely without a cause; nay we assign them another, and affirm that their only true and proper cause is this self-moving power, and the only cause of this is the Creator who communicated it.

On this subject may be seen Dr. Clarke's *Demonstrat.* p. 176, &c. 2d edit. or his *Remarks*, &c. p. 28, &c. or Chubb's *farther Reflections on Natural Liberty.* *Collection of Tracts*, p. 388, &c.

* *Essais de Theodicee*, p. 161, &c.

† See his 4th Letter to Dr. Clarke.

of such a principle. The more free any one is, and the less liable to external motions, the more perfect he is: God has therefore multiplied this kind of creatures as far as the system and order of his work allowed, and decreed that such as are passive in their operations should be subservient to these.

II. Since therefore happiness, according to the common notion of it, is granted to arise from a due use of those faculties and powers which every one enjoys; and since this power of determining ourselves to actions, and pleasing ourselves in them, is the most perfect of all, whereby we are the most conscious of our existence and our approach towards God; our chief happiness will consist in the proper use of it, nor can any thing be absolutely agreeable to us but what is chosen. (Q.) It is to be confessed

Happiness arises from the proper use of the faculties, &c. If power of choosing be the most noble of all, the greatest happiness will consist in the exercise of it i. e. in collections.

N O T E S.

(Q.) Against this it is objected, 1st, That the author here describes free-will to be a power of choosing this or that without any dependence either on the other faculties or attributes of the free agent, or on the qualities of external objects.

Answer. The author never said or imagined that liberty was a power to choose in all cases without any dependence on the other faculties, or the qualities of objects, but the direct contrary, viz. that all other faculties of the agent were to be considered, his appetites consulted, and the fitness of objects observed. He expressly teaches that if a free agent choose any thing contrary to the natural appetites without any cause, he gives himself unnecessary trouble; if any thing above his power to compass, or impossible in the nature of things, he makes himself so far unhappy. That which the author maintains is only this, that goodness is the agreement of a thing to some appetite, and that agreement may either arise from the natural fitness of the object to the appetite, or the appetite's accommodating itself to the object; that God has given us a power in many cases, and indeed in the most common affairs of life, to accommodate our will to things; that this is done by our choosing them, and whatsoever we so choose, if we can enjoy it, as long as the choice continues, will please us; and lastly,

nessed that many external objects, many that are offered by the senses, please us; but if we look into

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lastly, that this power is of mighty advantage to us; for we cannot expect that things should always answer our natural appetites; and therefore since it is unreasonable all the world should be made to accommodate us, it is a great benefit that God has given us a power to accommodate ourselves to the things as we find them; if we make a right use of this power we may be always happy, for we may always choose such things as we can enjoy, and reject those that cannot be had, and if we do so we may be always pleased.

Thus things may become good or evil to us by our choice, and our happiness or misery will depend upon it. Now he that would in earnest confute this notion has but one of these two things to do, either first, to shew that there is no such power or faculty possible, or adly, That there is no advantage in it.

I will put the rambling objections that I have met with in as good a method as I can, though they are generally so little to the purpose, that it is harder to bring them in than answer them.

adly, Therefore it is urged that we know by experience that to make a man please himself in his choice, it is not necessary that he should believe that he is not insensibly and imperceptibly directed to it by some external cause; and the inference from this, if intended against the author, must be, that therefore a man's choosing a thing doth not make it pleasing to him: but nothing like this follows; all that can be justly inferred is that whether a choice be free or necessitated it is sufficient to make the thing chosen agreeable.

It were in vain to produce all the instances impertinently brought to prove that a necessitated choice may please us. Yet to shew how strangely some authors can wander from the point, I will examine one or two of them. First, it is said, if a man should upon mature deliberation resolve on a thing, and whilst about to execute it, on a sudden a strong impetuous thought comes into his mind to do something else, and he follows that and succeeds, he would conceive an extraordinary joy; for he must imagine that God, a good Angel, or his good fortune had prompted him to do it, and therefore it is not his choice that pleases him.

I answer, First, it is plain such a man alters his choice, and makes a new one, and that new one pleases him; if his former choice continued, he could not have made the new one, nor would the doing the thing he is about otherwise satisfy him.

But

into the thing more narrowly, this will appear to arise from hence only, that these are as motives

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But adly, We must distinguish between the choice and the means of obtaining it. When once the choice is made, the most easy and effectual ways of obtaining the thing chosen please us best. A man is to fight a battle, his choice is to conquer; he thinks of means to execute it. Several ways occur, and he pitches upon one, which pleases and is chosen, not for itself, but as subservient to his desire of victory. An angel appears and directs him to another: none can doubt but this will cause extraordinary joy in him, because it brings him to obtain his choice by the most certain and infallible means. Now this is so far from proving that choice is not the thing that gives goodness to objects, that it directly proves the contrary. For here the only thing that makes him reject what his reason proposed to him as the best means to obtain his choice, is because he has discovered a better. On the other hand, if a general out of treachery should design to lose a battle, and it happened in the hurry that he should be forced to do something that gained it, he would not please himself in the action. Here's a victory that is good to one, and ill to another, and the difference lies plainly in the one's choosing and the other's rejecting it.

But adly, 'tis objected, that a *Jansenist* or *Calvinist* who gives an alms, and is persuaded that God inspires him to do so, is better pleased with himself than a *Stoic*, who attributes to himself all the glory of a charitable action. Well, what then? Therefore things do not please us because we choose them. No such matter. A true Christian, call him *Jansenist*, or what you will, chooses to prefer the glory of God to his own, and therefore he is better pleased to think the glory of what he does belongs to God, than to himself, as this is more agreeable to his choice.

In short, all the instances I have seen are of the same nature; and if there were a thousand of them they all receive the same answer, they are nothing to the purpose, and prove no more than that men are best pleased with the most effectual means to obtain their elections.

But 3dly, It is alledged, that if the happiness of man consists in his choice, God ought to have left him fairly to that choice, so that neither the other faculties of his soul nor qualities of objects, should have any power over him to restrain the use of his freedom.

If I understand this right, the meaning of it is, that God should not have given man any particular appetites determined to their objects, or made any thing impossible for him to attain that he pleased to choose. This I confess had been a freedom with a witness, for it had put it in the power of every man to turn the world as he pleased. But if one man had this power no other could have had it. For things can be but one way at once, and if one man had put them into a certain method, all the rest must either have been content with that or have been miserable; but God has put them in the way that is best, and since they must not be

tives which induce us to exert an act of election, whereby we embrace them as if they were agreeable

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changed, he has given every man a power to conform himself to them, and please himself in the choice: And to secure the preservation of men the better, he has given them natural appetites to such things as are necessary for their support, and thereby guarded their choice from hurting them as much as the nature of things, and the circumstances in which they are placed will permit, which is so far from being an injury, that it is a great instance of divine goodness, by setting bounds to our choice where it might hurt us, and leaving us in all other matters to please ourselves by a free election. Thus he has obliged us to take care of our lives by a strong appetite to continue our being. He has secured our feeding our bodies by the appetite of hunger, so that we are uneasy under it; and yet that uneasiness is not so great, but our choice, tho' with some difficulty, will make it pleasing to us; and so in all other appetites, by which we are prompted to supply our natural necessities. And thus they always mistake the matter that presume to teach God what he should do.

But 4thly, It is urged, that we desire happiness necessarily, and cannot choose evil as evil, and therefore our choice does not make things agreeable, that is, good. But I see no manner of consequence in the argument, it rather proves the contrary. For we must take notice that good and evil are respective things, and have relation to some appetite. Now we have several appetites determined to their objects, and the things agreeable and disagreeable to them are good or bad antecedently to choice. But there are other things, that have no agreeableness or inconvenience to any appetite before election, and then are good or bad as they agree with that choice. Now 'tis plain, that there is nothing good or bad in respect of our natural appetites, but we can choose it, even death itself: and therefore it is not meant of them, or of this sort of evil, when we say we cannot choose evil. But it is absolutely impossible that we should choose what is contrary to choice, and so evil in that sense; for then we should choose it, and not choose it at the same time.

But 5thly, 'Tis further objected, that those who believe that they are only free from constraint, those that think their will is determined by the understanding, and those who are of opinion that they possess indifference of will, are all equally content with themselves, so they choose conveniently; that is, so they enjoy their choice, or attain some great good whether they fore-saw it or no.

I answer, this may be true, but nothing to the purpose; since it is manifest all of them make a choice, and provided they obtain what they have chosen, they are so far satisfied; which only proves that our choice, whether we believe it to be necessitated or voluntary, is of so great force as to make the thing chosen agreeable, *i. e.* good, as long as the choice lasts.

The true point in question here is, which of these hypotheses will best secure the happiness of men. As to the first of these opinions,

agreeable to the natural appetites : for though the will cannot be determined to election by any

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opinions, that supposes us free only from constraint, and that our choice is necessarily determined to the good or ill we conceive in objects, the author has proved that on this supposition happiness is impossible, in his 5th chap. sect. 1. subject. 1. par. 13. As to the 2d, which supposes the will to be determined by the last act of the understanding, this is shewn to be equivalent to necessity, because the understanding is necessary and obliged to judge as things appear to it. And as to the 3d, that places an indifference in the will, the author has shewn, Chap. 5. Sect. 1. Subject. 2. par. 8. that mere indifference of choice is of no use, but rather an impediment to happiness, except the will have at the same time a power to make the thing chosen agreeable. If such a power be in the will, the author shews, Subject. 3. of the same Sect, par. 22. that the agent possessed of it may be happy to a certain degree, tho' he have a very imperfect understanding and commit many mistakes.

It ought likewise to be considered, that if we really have this power, it is not material whether we know or believe that we have it or no; for whatever our opinion of it be, it will do its own work. If a man believe himself free, as generally men do, when he really is necessitated by a force he doth not perceive, he is never the freer on that account. And if he believe himself necessitated contrary to what he feels in his own mind, as some are persuaded to do by the sophistical arguments of vain philosophers, he is never the less free for that. And hence it is, that whatever opinion men have concerning the freedom or necessity of choice, they are equally pleased or displeased with it, when once it is made; because the pleasure doth not arise from their opinion concerning the faculty, but from the use of it.

But lastly, 'tis said that good angels and saints in heaven have no such liberty as this; that the good angels are perfectly determined to love God, and the souls of men as soon as they enter heaven, cease to be indifferent to good and evil, and cannot make any other than a good choice.

If this is intended against the author's position, the inference must be, either that the angels and saints do not actually choose to be in heaven, or that heaven doth not please because they choose to be there, neither of which consequences do at all follow. But then is it not strange, that a liberty of indifference which remains no longer than our miserable sojourning on earth, and is at an end as soon as a man begins to be perfectly happy, should be necessary to our happiness, and the fountain of it here? To which I answer, that the whole argument is founded on a great mistake.

The author believes that the angels and blessed in heaven are happy only by this means; that they freely choose every act that they perform, and are always able to execute what they choose. I own that they never choose amiss, nor ever will: but the rea-

any thing but itself, yet it may be *persuaded to determine itself*, in order to avoid what is absurd and disgustful to the natural appetites.

Election
is the
cause why
things
please us.

III. For 'tis certain that we make use of the assistance of the understanding in elections, and hold

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son of that is not want of power, but because either 1st, their circumstances are such that they have no opportunity to make such choices: Or 2^{dly}, because they are so well pleased with the choice they have made that they will never alter it; or 3^{dly}, because their experience has shewed them what misery an ill choice has brought on them or others. Time was when some angels made an ill choice, and were thrown into hell for it: can we wonder if those that remain are grown wiser, and have learnt by the misery of their fellows to choose better? The same may be said of the saints. They may remember the miseries they suffered here on earth, and that may teach them how to avoid the like: But to argue that because they will not choose amiss, therefore they cannot, is a false conclusion. The truth is, herein consists their virtue, their goodness and merit, that having the power to choose amiss, they will not; and being possessed of a faculty which they may either use well or abuse, they employ it to the best purpose. Thus we may understand how the saints and angels are confirmed in goodness, not mechanically, or by a physical restraint on their wills, but by the firmness of their resolution and steadiness of choice. If the case were otherwise, their virtue were no virtue, nor any way praise-worthy; they would be good creatures, as the sun is good, but no more thanks to them than to him.

Let us consider farther, that tho' the angels and blessed in heaven should have lost their freedom so far as not to be able to choose evil, yet this doth not take away their choice in other actions. We must not think that these blessed creatures are altogether idle, and have no business or exercise of their faculties; they surely employ themselves in what is good; and as there may be great variety of actions in which they may employ themselves with pleasure, there is still choice enough left them, and the reason why one sort of exercise pleases them more than another arises from their choice. For having no necessities to supply by labour as we have here, no particular exercise is necessary to them, and therefore nothing can be supposed to make one exercise more pleasing than another, but their choice. And in truth we count ourselves the most happy here, when we have no particular business to oblige us to labour, but are left to employ our time as we please.

But lastly, we don't know how it is with the saints and angels in heaven; we know they are happy, but how or by what means we are entirely ignorant, and must be, till we get thither, and therefore no argument ought or can be drawn from the state of their happiness to ours.

hold it as a light before us to distinguish good from evil; but we use it as a judge and a counsellor, not as a sovereign and a dictator: and to speak the truth, in order to avoid foolish and hurtful things, rather than to acquire what is good and agreeable. For whatever we choose will (as was shewn before) be *ipso facto* good and agreeable, except it lead us into something contrary to the appetites, or otherwise absurd. The understanding therefore points out and admonishes us (as we said before) to avoid these external evils; or to embrace the good: but till we have exerted an act of election about them, neither is the one absolutely pleasing, nor the other displeasing. We have proved before that this is the case, and it will be evident from experience to any one that considers it. If then nothing please us but what is in some respect chosen, 'tis manifest that our happiness must be sought for in election.

IV. We have shewn above, that an intelligent creature, which is merely passive in its operations, cannot be made entirely happy: for as it is liable to external motions, it must necessarily meet with hurtful as well as useful objects; nor is it possible that all things should be agreeable. It remains therefore, that a creature which is to be exempt from all kind of grief should have the principle of his own happiness within him, and be able to delight himself, in what manner soever external things be disposed; *i. e.* that he have the government of his own actions, and may please himself by willing either this or something else: Such an agent as this is, will be satisfied with any object that occurs; since objects are not chosen by him because they please him, but on the contrary, please him be-

He therefore that has a free power of choosing, can always please himself.

cause they are chosen. Whoever therefore has free choice may make himself happy, viz. by choosing every thing which befalls him, and adapting his choice to things.

We can change our elections to make them conformable to things, and so can attain happiness.

V. And this seems to be the only way that creatures can be made compleatly happy: for since things themselves are necessarily fixed by certain laws, and cannot be changed, it remains that the elections be altered, in order to make them conformable to things, i. e. to the will of God; for thus free agents will have a power in themselves of attaining happiness. Hence it is that we are so frequently admonished in holy scripture to be *conformed to God**; on this point our salvation and happiness turn: And with good reason; for what is happiness, if not to be in every thing as we will, or choose? But he who chooses to conform himself in all things to the Divine Will, must certainly be always what he would be, and will never be disappointed in his choice: however external things fall out, a person thus disposed may enjoy happiness, nor does any one seem to have been capable of it on other terms.

Care of the body and the natural appetites disturb elections in this present state, and hinder our happiness from being perfect.

VI. But perfect happiness, may some say, is not to be expected; for those beings which are united to terrestrial matter must necessarily be affected with the motions of it, as was shewn before, and cannot bear the dissolution of the body, or the impairing of its organs (which are yet unavoidable) without some pain and uneasy sensation. I confess, absolute felicity is by no means to be hoped for in the present state: But yet the more our elections are conformable to things, the more happy we are; if then our elections were perfectly free, we should also be at liberty to enjoy perfect happiness; but since the care of our bodies, and the natural appetites

* Rom. xii. 2. Coloss. iii. 1, 2, &c.

tites disturb our elections, and sometimes bias them to one side, we cannot please ourselves in elections absolutely, and without a mixture of uneasiness. For though they afford delight, and even greater than the natural appetites, yet they do not remove all manner of uneasiness, nor extinguish the sense of pain. While therefore we are in this state, we must acquiesce in a mixed and imperfect happiness, such as the present state of things affords; and it is plain that this, such as it is, arises only from elections. For though we cannot by mere election always extinguish the pain and uneasiness which arises from our being forced to bear such things as are disgustful to the natural appetites, yet we can choose to bear these things, and please ourselves in that choice: the consciousness of our powers in bearing these surpassing the uneasiness of pain, nay perhaps augmenting the pleasure so far as that the excess of it shall overcome the pain arising from the frustrated appetites by so many degrees as could have been obtained, if there had been no contrariety between them and the election. For instance, if one feel two degrees of pain from a distemper, and receive six degrees of pleasure from an election to bear it with patience and decorum; subtracting two degrees of pain from these six of pleasure, he has four of solid pleasure remaining: He will be as happy therefore as one that has four degrees pure and free from all pain. If this be granted to be possible, we may be as happy with the natural appetites, as if nature had given us none, nor will there be any cause to complain of them. (R.)

VII.

NOTES.

(R.) The true advantage of such a faculty appears in many instances, as is observed in the book. First, when by the course of nature and the order of the world we are obliged to undergo

We have reason to admire the Divine Wisdom, which created an appetite that has where-with to please itself in its own nature, how-soever external things be disposed.

VII. And here, by the way, we may admire the Divine Goodness and Wisdom, which (since objects

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many things contrary to our natural appetites, many things painful and disagreeable. 1dly, when by the weakness of our understanding we are obliged to make choices the consequence of which we cannot foresee, as it must often happen to a finite understanding. 3dly, when the general good of the world requires us to sacrifice our particular interest or appetite. Lastly, where there is little or no difference in matter of choice, as it happens in most things of life. In all these and many other cases, the right use of this faculty gives us ease and satisfaction, and without it we must be in continual torment.

If it be said that reason tells us we ought to be content and submit in such cases, and therefore if the will be determined by the last act of the understanding, there will need no such faculty as the author pleads for, that can make a thing good by choosing. I reply. on the contrary, this very case shews the necessity of such a faculty. For suppose I am sick and feel great pain; my understanding tells me this is unavoidable, that it is the will of God and the course of nature, and therefore I ought to bear it with patience. If I have a power of choosing thus to bear it, and by that choice of making it in some measure pleasing to me, it is to very good purpose that my understanding makes this representation, for by means thereof I obtain a degree of happiness in the midst of all the natural evils that oppress me. But if I have no such power to choose, or if I choose, and that choice does not make the thing I suffer better, it is in vain that my understanding makes such a representation; it only tells me that I am miserable, but yields me no help. Counsellors are of great use to a person that has a power to execute what they advise; otherwise their advices are in vain, and only serve to augment the person's misery by shewing his impotence to help himself. 'Tis thus between the understanding and the will: if we suppose no power in the will by choosing to make objects agreeable or disagreeable, it is in vain for the understanding to advise us to choose them. To what purpose should we choose them, when our choice can make no alteration in them as to their good or evil qualities?

But here it will be said, that antecedent to the choice there is a goodness in bearing sickness patiently, and the understanding by representing that goodness to the will determines it to choose it, and from that sense of good arises the pleasure and ease we find in patience. But this I think is a plain mistake; for we often find one man of better sense than another uneasy under pain, whilst the weaker makes it easy to himself.

If you discourse with these two, you will find that the man of better understanding has a much clearer representation of all motives that may induce patience than the other; knows exactly all the benefits of contentment, and how much it is his interest to comply with his circumstances; and yet he does it not.

How

objects are generally fixed and confined under certain laws) could create an appetite that should

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How then comes this difference? Whence can it arise but from this, that the one chooses to comply and the other does not? If it be merely the reasons and motives being more advantageously represented to one man than the other, that makes the one patient and the other impatient under pain; either that representation arises from some free act of the will, or from some natural or accidental disposition, inclination, or circumstance of the agent. If from a free act of the will, then it recurs to what was pleaded for at the first, *viz.* that we are pleased because we choose. But if the representation that determines our choice arise from any natural or accidental disposition, &c. these being all external to the will, and out of its power, 'tis plain the determination cannot be free. He is a happy man to whom such a disposition, &c. happens, but he cannot be looked on as more virtuous or commendable than he that chooses ill because he wants them. He may be commended, as gold or jewels are, because he has some things that agree to our desires, but not as an agent that merits thanks or praise for virtue.

And here I must observe, that the generality of men imagine that every thing antecedently to choice is either good or evil, and we so far concerned in it, that except we could poise the whole world exactly, and balance all future consequences with respect to our convenience or inconvenience, we could never perform any act but what must either contribute to our happiness or hinder it. But this is a most false supposition, and contrary to reason as well as experience. For it happens in a thousand instances, that the things we choose are of so little moment as to be perfectly indifferent to us, and that only pleases best which we choose. A man is walking in a bowling-green, the exercise of his limbs is all that he designs, and which way soever he walks he is equally pleased. But if any one hinder him after he has chosen his way, or force him to a different one, it will provoke his anger, and perhaps put him on a quarrel that may cost him his life.

There's no necessity therefore that to make an equilibrium for the will, the world should be so divided that all impressions from one part, and the other, should be actually equal: for as a man may turn the beam of a balance with his hand, though as many weights lie in the other scale as it can hold; so the will may determine itself, though all the considerations the world affords lay in opposition to the thing we choose: but it often happens, that the world affords none at all either way, and then the will alone turns the balance. And in truth, if our happiness were concerned in every circumstance of life, it were unreasonable to oblige us to choose before we knew them all, which is impossible; and so God would have made a right choice to depend on an impossible

should have wherewith to satisfy it within itself; and might render any state agreeable, barely

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possible condition. Whereas if we have a power by the pleasure of our choice to balance the inconveniencies that happen from outward things, it sufficiently justifies the divine goodness, tho' he has put us in such circumstances, that it is impossible always to regulate our choice as we would have done, had we foreseen all the consequences that attend it.

But here it is urged, that though a man doth not always perceive the reason which determines him to choose one of the two things that seem perfectly equal, yet there is always some secret impression that does determine him. But this is to suppose the very thing in question; just as if a man should go about to solve an objection, to which he could find no other answer, by telling the objector that it could not be true, because if it were, the position against which he produced it must be false.

In short, we prove the freedom and indifference of the will by producing many instances where there is no motive to determine it one way more than the other: Nay, when all visible motives are against it. To which the enemies of freewill reply, 'tis true they cannot produce or find any reason; but there is one, though imperceptible to the man that chooses, as well as the rest of the world. Which as it is said without reason, needs none to confute it.

But they ought to remember, that to choose any thing for a reason not known or observed, is to choose without reason; a reason unknown is no reason at all, except they'll say that the will is determined as mechanically as matter is by impulse.

But we carry the matter yet much farther, and shew that where there are many and strong motives, great conveniency and agreeableness to our natural appetites on one side, and nothing but the exercise of our liberty on the other, we often prefer that to all these motives, and are well pleased with ourselves, when we have done so.

The men that might live an easy and quiet life engage in business, toil and labour; and every one is so well pleased with his choice, that it is hard to say amongst so many states and such variety of conditions, which are most happy: and though they sometimes complain when pressed with inconveniencies, yet as *Horace* observes, hardly one would change if an option were given him. If the things themselves please abstractedly from choice, most men being of one make, and having the same passions, wants and appetites, those only that had all things suitable to those appetites could be pleased, and all the world would be confined to one way of living.

But as happiness arises from the choice, it so happens, that in the great variety of circumstances wherein men are placed, they generally are pretty equally happy, because they enjoy their choice. A mariner's is a life that seems intolerable to me, and destitute of all those things that are agreeable to my natural appetites;

barely by willing it. Now free-will has this effect by accommodating itself to objects, where the objects themselves cannot be changed. For the man will be no less happy who chooses what he knows will come to pass, than he who brings that to pass which he chooses; the one may always be done, the other is often impossible: this therefore, or none, is the way to arrive at happiness. 'Tis hard to comprehend how he can fail of happiness, who has it in his power to please himself. This seems to have been the opinion of the ancient *Stoics*, who had the same thoughts of liberty with those laid down above, but did not explain them distinctly, nor comprehend the whole series of the matter.

However,

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petites; suppose then I am forced to that kind of life, must I needs be miserable? No, I will and can make it my choice; not from any motive which my understanding affords me, for it represents it as disagreeable in every respect: But I will choose and resolve to follow it, that it may please me, and by the force of that choice it will at length become agreeable.

If it be said that the necessity which is on me to lead that sort of life determines my choice; I answer, that quite contrary, nothing is more opposite to choice than force, and we find nothing is apter to make us reject and be displeased with a thing than to see it forced on us. My being forced therefore on ship-board would rather raise an aversion than pleasure in me; but as soon as by the power of my free-will I resolve to live that life, and be pleased with it, I find the pleasure begin and grow upon me. If there be any wisdom in the world, undoubtedly this is the masterpiece, to make all things easy to us by choosing the state and condition of life in which necessity has placed us.

But my understanding representing the evil and hardship of a thing with the necessity of bearing it, will no way contribute to my ease, except at the same time it assure me that I can take away or diminish the natural evil that accompanies it, if I choose to endure it with contentment. Without this, the consideration of the necessity that is upon me, would rather increase the difficulty and uneasiness I feel, than allay it; as knowing the danger of a distemper increases a man's fear of death, if at the same time no remedy be offered.

In short, the exercise of this faculty of making things agreeable by choice, is all the remedy nature affords us under unavoidable sufferings; if we have it not, we have none; and if we have, it takes off the complaint we make against God for putting us in such circumstances where we necessarily must undergo such evils.

However, 'tis very plain that they placed happiness in the use and election of such things as are in our own power; which yet would be impossible, if we were not able to please ourselves in election. (59.)

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(59.) Our author's mentioning the *Stoics* here, might probably give *Leibnitz* his reason to suspect him of maintaining all the absurd consequences which that sect are said to have drawn from the above-mentioned principle. They indeed (if they be not greatly misrepresented) urged it so far as to assert, that nothing external could hurt or incommode us except we pleased: that all good and evil was entirely in our power and of our making; and consequently, that all outward things were indifferent and alike to us, antecedent to our own choice. Which notions, being contrary to every day's experience in pleasure and pain, led them on to deny that the latter was properly an evil, or rather that there was any difference at all between them. This doctrine is indeed liable to *Leibnitz*'s objections of confounding all the distinctions of things,—of contradicting the natural appetites, —making reason and understanding useless,—and subverting all the other faculties of the mind. These and the like reflections, I say, are justly made upon the doctrine of the *Stoics*, as they have generally expressed themselves; and overthrow a total, *absolute indifference* of the *mind* to will in all cases; but are nothing at all to our author, who never contended for it; but on the contrary, insists upon a necessary, fixed, and unalterable difference in the natures of things, according to the present system; and has allowed their full force to both reason and the natural appetites, all over the last section, as well as in the foregoing chapters of this book.

But this has been explained in the notes above. For an application of this section, see § 5. Subsect. 2. and the Notes to § 5. Subsect. 3.

S E C T. III.

Concerning undue Elections.

I. **F**ROM hence it is sufficiently evident, To fall short of what we choose is misery; we choose amiss, therefore when we choose what cannot be enjoyed: This is done 1st, when such things are chosen as are impossible. what kind of elections are to be called *undue* ones: For it appears, that God has given us this faculty of choosing, that we may please ourselves in the use of it, and be happy in the fruition of those objects which we choose. For it is a happiness to obtain the things chosen, and misery to be frustrated and fall short of them. Whensoever therefore we knowingly make such a choice, as not to be able to enjoy the things chosen, it is plain that we choose foolishly and unduely: for we bring upon ourselves unnecessary misery, since we could have chosen otherwise with equal pleasure. Whoever then chooses knowingly what he cannot obtain, or what may produce unnecessary trouble to himself or others, he must be esteemed to choose unduely. And this may be done, first, If any one choose *impossibilities*. It may seem strange that any person should choose a thing which is impossible, knowing it to be so; but 'tis very probable that this has happened sometimes, as was said before *.

II. Secondly, If he choose such things as are *inconsistent* with each other: he that does this contradicts himself, and evidently cuts off all hopes of enjoyment. When we will any thing, we must take all its necessary consequences together with it. But all things here are of a mixed kind, and nothing is pure from all degrees of bitterness: we often therefore will that part in a certain thing which is agreeable to the appetites, and refuse the rest: but this is in vain, since the agreeable

* Sect. 1. Subsect. 5. par. 10, 11, 12.

agreeable parts cannot be separated from the disagreeable ones: we must therefore either choose or reject the whole. He that does otherwise cannot possibly satisfy himself, since he must bear with what he would not: He is therefore voluntarily unhappy by an undue election.

Thirdly,
If the
things
chosen be
not in the
power of
the elector.

III. Thirdly, he must be esteemed to choose unduely, who aims at such things as he knows are not *in his power*. For it is a hazard whether he enjoys those things that are not in his power, and it is foolish to commit our happiness to chance; while therefore it is in our power to choose only such things as we are certain of obtaining, we risk our happiness, or throw it away when we pursue uncertainties: Now we owe as much happiness to ourselves as is in our power, and ought to use our utmost endeavours to attain it; but we lose this by undue election, when we desire those things which we know to be out of our power.

Fourthly,
If any
choose
that which
is pre-oc-
cupied by
the lawful
choice of
others.

IV. Fourthly, That also is an undue election, which obliges us to seize those things that are lawfully *occupied* by the elections of other men. To be disappointed of an election is misery, as we said before; to enjoy it, happiness. Every one therefore that is endowed with a power of choosing, has a right to the enjoyment of the thing chosen, so far as is necessary to the exercise of his own faculties, and is no impediment to the good of others. But he must be esteemed an impediment to the good of others, who will appropriate to himself what is common, or assume more and greater advantages from the common stock than fall to his share. Those things then which are preoccupied by the choice of other men belong to the choosers, and cannot justly be taken from them: therefore he that covets them would have what is not his due: *i. e.* endeavours by undue election to rob others

others of their right. This is to be referred in an especial manner to such things as are pre-occupied by the choice of the Deity; for these are to be esteemed by all as sacred and prohibited: nor can any one meet with success that opposes himself to God, and chooses what God disapproves. For what God wills must necessarily come to pass, but God wills the happiness of all men as far as it is possible; therefore he that offends unnecessarily against the happiness of any one, is supposed to offend against God, and to choose what is not his due.

V. Fifthly, On this account it is unlawful for us to desire those things which are *hurtful* to ourselves or others. By hurtful things I understand those that lead to natural evils, *viz.* such as are prejudicial to the body or mind. It appears from what has been said, that things please because they are chosen, but reason persuades us to abstain from such elections as may prove pernicious to our own minds, or those of others; or such as defraud the appetites unnecessarily: for we owe a gratification to these appetites, when it can be procured without greater detriment. Therefore an election opposed to these *gratis*, and without any reason, must be judged an undue one, because it deprives us of the due enjoyment of our appetites. (V.)

Fifthly,
When
those
things
which
tend to
natural
evils, are
chosen
without
necessity

S E C T.

, N O T E S.

- (V.) It has been objected, that 'tis a contradiction for God to create such a faculty as is above described, and yet that it should choose amiss: for what can be amiss to a faculty that can make every thing good by choosing? But the answer is plain, the faculty is not so indifferent but it has limitations, and he that has limits certainly does amiss by transgressing them. Tho' there is a natural power in the will to choose a thing in opposition to all its natural appetites and the dictates of the understanding, and hereby to give itself some degree of pleasure for the time, and we see that it sometimes doth so; yet the evils that proceed from such an exorbitant exercise of this noble faculty plainly shew, that

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that it ought not have done so; and the author never said, or imagined any one would think he meant that wisdom and prudence were useless to such an agent, or that he ought not to regulate the exercise of this faculty so as to prevent its fixing on impossible, absurd, or inconsistent things, or the clashing of his choice with his natural appetites and their satisfaction. A king must have a power to punish his wicked subjects with death, and to reward those that deserve it with honours and riches; if he had not this power, he could not govern. But shall he therefore kill the innocent and squander away his favours on the undeserving? So man has free will by which he may choose objects, and gratify himself in the choice; doth it therefore follow that he may choose things impossible, things beyond his power, or contrary to his natural appetites? Yet if he had not this natural power to choose, he could no more be happy, than a prince could govern that had not the power of rewards and punishments.

S E C T. IV.

How it is possible for us to fall into undue Elections.

I. **I**T is difficult to comprehend, as was said This is done five ways. before, how one can fall short of happiness who has it in his power to please himself; yet if he choose in the foregoing manner, or the like, he must necessarily fail of his choice, and his appetite be frustrated, *i. e.* he must be unhappy. But how is it possible, you will say, that any one should make such a choice? * I answer, this may proceed first, from *error* or *ignorance*. Secondly, from *inadvertency* or *negligence*. Thirdly, from *levity*. Fourthly, from a contracted *habit*. Fifthly, from other *appetites* implanted in us by nature. Not that the will can be determined by these, or any thing else which is external; but that from hence it takes an handle and occasion of determining itself, which it would not have had otherwise.

II. First, As to the first of these, we have First, by error or culpable ignorance. proved before that we are liable to errors and ignorance; and that this is to be reckoned among natural evils. When therefore we are forced to choose among things not sufficiently known, our errors are not to be charged upon us, nor is it credible that God will suffer them to prove fatal to us. But when we are under no manner of necessity, an election often presents itself to us in matters sufficiently understood, and then we hurry on without a strict and careful enquiry, and choose impossibilities, &c. and therefore are not entirely free from fault, since we ought to deliberate and examine things before election.

* A 2

III. Se-

* See *Locke's* chapter of power §. 5, 7, &c.

Secondly,
By negli-
gence.

III. Secondly, These undue elections therefore may happen through inadvertency, for by due care we might perceive the good and evil which is in objects; but being negligent and supine, we are frequently imposed upon, and suffer for our negligence, by falling into the forementioned inconveniencies.

Thirdly,
By giving
too great
indul-
gence to
the exer-
cise of
election.

IV. As to the third, since the pleasure of a free agent consists in election, it is no wonder that he gives himself as large a scope as he can in the exercise of it. Neither will it be any thing surprising, if in this full exercise of elections, he sometimes transgresses the bounds prescribed him by God and nature; and light upon some things which are attended with no very prosperous issue, (*viz.* absurdities and impossibilities) since he will attempt every thing. For he pleases himself in the trial, though he be unfortunate in the event; but this is no excuse; for every one is obliged to take care of himself, lest he be too fond of indulging new elections, and from levity become unduely troublesome to himself or others.

Fourthly,
By disti-
nati-
on, or a
habit.

V. Fourthly, we see that frequent choice creates an habit; this seems to proceed from hence, that as we delight in an election often repeated, we are easily induced to hope that the same pleasure will always follow the same act, whereupon we grow supine and negligent, and disregard the alterations of things; and he that does this may easily fall into such elections as will not be attended with success. Beside, it is difficult for us to change those elections, the delight of which is fixed and, as it were, riveted in the mind by frequent experience: yet we are not excusable for rushing upon absurd and impossible things, in order to avoid the uneasiness
attend-

attending the change of election. And if we search into the case more narrowly, we shall find that most undue elections arise from this unseasonable perseverance, all which deservedly come under the character of culpable obstinacy.

VI. Fifthly, It has been often hinted, that we consist of a soul and body, that these are mutually affected by each other, and that from hence various appetites arise in us, such as the preservation of the body, desire of offspring, and the like; and whatever is an impediment to these, we reckon hurtful. If therefore we be not upon our guard, we are hurried on by the importunity of them to absurdities, or when we give a loose to our elections, we grasp at such things as offer an unnecessary violence to them: hence arise an immense train of uneasinesses to ourselves and others; hence comes violence and injury to our nature and the natural appetites, to which we owe at least a moderate indulgence: hereupon we rashly and unlawfully seize those things that are pre-occupied by the elections or appetites of other men: nay, are not so cautious as to refrain from what is determined by the will of God himself: from these and the like occasions it happens that we abuse our liberty, and by undue elections bring natural evils upon ourselves or others. For as we are endowed with liberty in these and the like cases, we may either use it according to the dictate of reason, or abuse it: this power seems to be included in the very notion of created liberty.

VII. It appears from hence how cautiously elections ought to be made; for tho' nothing pleases us but what is chosen, yet we do not only take delight in *choosing*, but much more in *enjoying* changed.

joying the things chosen, otherwise it would be the same thing whatever we chose: we must take care then that our elections be made of such things as we may always enjoy. For if they be of perishable objects, or such as are not in the least answerable to the end of the elector, he that chooses them must necessarily grieve at the disappointment. He may avoid this, will some say, by changing his election, when the thing chosen perishes or fails; but it is to be observed that elections are not changed without a sense of grief and remorse. For we never think of altering them till we are convinced that we have chosen amiss. When therefore we are disappointed of the enjoyment of what we have chosen, we despair, become miserable, penitent, and conscious of an evil choice, and then at last begin to alter our choice; which cannot be done without an anxious and uneasy sense of disappointment, and the more and longer we have been intent upon any election, so much the greater pain it will cost us to be forced to change it. Hence proceeds the difficulty which we feel in altering elections; hence many had rather persist in absurd elections than undergo the trouble of altering them: For things please us because we will them; but to reject what we have once willed is contradicting ourselves, and cannot be done without a very disagreeable struggle and convulsion of the mind: as any one may learn from experience. (60.)

S E C T.

N O T E S.

(60.) Any one that attentively considers the workings of his own mind, will soon be satisfied of the truth of all that our author here advances; he will observe what difficulty and reluctance he feels in receding from what he has once firmly resolved upon, tho' perhaps he can perceive no manner of good in it except what arises purely from that resolution. To make a visit at a certain time; to walk to any particular place; to recreate ourselves with this

S E C T. V.

How Evil Elections are consistent with the Power and Goodness of God.

S U B S E C T. I.

Proposes the Difficulty, with a Preparative to the Solution of it.

I. **W**E have shewn that moral evils arise from undue election; that elections are free; and that it is not at all necessary for any one knowingly and willingly to pursue the worse. Moral evils cannot therefore be excused by necessity, as the natural ones, and those of imperfection are. It is plain that created nature implies imperfection in the very terms of its being created (since what is absolutely perfect is very God,) either therefore nothing at all must be created, or something imperfect. We have shewn

The evils of free-agents are not necessary, and therefore seem to be permitted by God voluntarily.

N O T E S.

this or that kind of diversion; may be actions in themselves perfectly indifferent and trivial: but when once proposed, even upon mere whim and caprice, and resolved on with as little reason, they become often as much the objects of our hope and desire, the thoughts of prosecuting them give us as great pleasure and satisfaction, and we are as unwillingly withdrawn from them, and as much disappointed when we fall short of the fancied enjoyment of them, as we should be in matters of the last importance. Every man that has taken the least notice of what passes within himself, is able to give numberless instances of the truth of the foregoing observation: which may serve to convince us how great the force and power of *volition* is, and what excellent use it may be of in life. How it supplies us with courage and constancy in the most arduous undertakings, and enables us to surmount the greatest difficulties: how it qualifies and alleviates our pain, and augments the sum of our happiness; and makes us run contentedly the round of low and otherwise tedious pursuits, and bear with pleasure the otherwise insupportable load of human woes. This shews the great usefulness and necessity of such a principle, and will lead us to consider with our author, in what a cautious manner it ought to be exerted, lest it fall upon wrong and improper objects, and thereby, instead of lessening, increase our misery, and become itself the greatest part of it. That this principle of liberty, though frequently attended with these consequences, is yet a gift worthy of the most beneficent donor, must appear from a general computation of its good and evil effects, with regard to the whole system, which will be the subject of the following sections.

shewn that by the same necessity natural evils are annexed to things naturally imperfect, and that God, agreeably to what infinite power and goodness required, permitted no manner of evil in nature, the absence whereof would not have introduced more or greater evil. Since therefore inconveniencies attend either the presence or absence of it, God made that which was attended with the least. There are no evils then which could possibly be avoided, and therefore they must be looked upon as necessary, since the imperfection of a creature did not admit of pure and absolute good. But this necessity does not appear in free agents: for the evils incident to them seem to proceed, not from imperfection of nature, but *free choice*, and are therefore permitted by God voluntarily, since neither the nature of things, nor the good of the universe require the permission of them: that is, the world would be as well without as with them.

Moral evils have no necessary connection with a free nature, nor are of any advantage to it.

II. It is to be observed, that God permitted the former kind of evils because they were inseparable from things; either therefore the things must not have been created, or their inherent evils tolerated. But evil elections have no necessary connection with the free acts of the will: neither does the nature of man require that he should choose amiss: nor does any benefit accrue to him from these elections which could not be obtained without them, as it does in hunger, thirst, fear, and the rest of the passions: for without these affections, as was shewn, the animal would soon perish; but no evil would befall us (nay what good would not?) if we always attended to reason, and never chose amiss. Since therefore man might bring the greatest pleasure to himself, and exercise his faculties by choosing always well, how comes it to pass that God suffers him to hurt himself and others unnecessarily

necessarily by evil elections? If it be said that a power of choosing either side is contained in the very notion of liberty; this must be allowed, but yet there seems to be room enough for the exercise of liberty, though the will were confined to the choice of what is lawful and convenient; what need is there then of such a power as may extend to the choice of evil?

III. This seems to be the hardest point, the main stress of the difficulty, *viz.* Whence come Moral evils; *i. e.* those that are not necessary? If they be said to be necessary, how are they free? If they be not necessary, why does God permit them? The latter seems repugnant to the goodness of God, the former to the nature of a free agent.

Here lies the stress of the difficulty, *viz.* why did God permit those evils which are neither necessary nor useful?

IV. It must be confessed, that we are less prepared for a solution of this difficulty than the former; for the nature and systems of the intellectual world are less known to us than those of the purely material one: Material objects surround us, and occupy all the inlets to knowledge, and are the only things that immediately affect our senses. They intrude upon us with an infinite variety, and produce many and various sensations in us. But of intellectual beings, of their operations, or of the mutual connection between them, we have but very few, and those very obscure notions, *viz.* such as arise only from the reflection of our understanding upon itself, or are collected by the use of reason deducing one thing from another: For, of all intellectual beings, our own mind alone is immediately perceived by us; nor can we (as in bodies) compare the notions arising from it, with those that proceed from other sources: all our knowledge therefore of spirits or thinking beings is derived from this alone. It is no wonder then if we be very much in the dark

We don't know so much of the nature of thinking beings as of material ones, and therefore are less prepared for an answer to this difficulty.

dark in our reasonings about these and their operations; and do not so clearly perceive the necessity of allowing free-will to them, as contrariety in the motions of matter; nor so easily apprehend what inconvenience would follow from restraining the exercise of liberty, as we see the consequence of taking away the motion of matter. We know that without motion the whole mass of matter would prove entirely useless, and that there would be no room for so many animals as now we find receive their origin and subsistence from it; which is justly esteemed a greater evil, and more intolerable than all the natural evils arising from matter and motion: and we should find the same thing in the prevention of the use of free will, if we understood the system of the intellectual as well as that of the material world. But if we can shew that more evils necessarily arise from withdrawing or restraining the use of free-will, than from permitting the abuse of it, it must be evident that God is obliged to suffer either these or greater evils. And since the least of these necessary evils is chosen, even infinite goodness could not possibly do better.

The abuse of free-will may be conceived to have been prevented three ways, which are considered in the following subjecti-

V. Let us try then whether the abuse of free-will could be prohibited with less detriment to the whole system, than what arises from the permission of it. There are three ways whereby God may be conceived able to have prevented bad elections; first, If he had created no free-being at all. Secondly, If his Omnipotence interpose, and occasionally restrain the will, which is naturally free, from any wrong election. Thirdly, If he should change the present state of things, and translate man into another, where the occasions of error and incitements to evil being cut off, he should meet with nothing that could tempt him to choose amiss.

SUBJECT.

SUBJECT. II.

Why God has created Free Agents.

I. **A**S to the first, 'Tis certain that God was not compelled by any necessity to create any thing at all, he might therefore have prevented all moral evils, if he had not endowed any being with free choice: for so there would have been nothing that could sin. But such a monstrous defect and *hiatus* would have been left in nature by this means, *viz.* by taking away all free agents; as would have put the world into a worse condition than that which it is in at present, with all the moral evils that distress it, though they were multiplied to a much greater number.

God might have prevented moral evils, if he had refused to create any free being.

II. For in the first place, if we set aside free agents, *i. e.* those which have the principle of action within themselves, there is properly nothing at all self-active, for all other beings are merely passive: there is indeed some kind of action in matter, *viz.* motion; but we know that it is passive even with regard to that; 'tis therefore the action of God upon matter, rather than of matter itself; which does not move itself, but is moved. Without free agents then the whole world would be a mere *machine*, capable of being turned any way by the finger or will of God, but able to effect nothing of itself. Nay the whole work of God could not of itself exert one single act or thought; but would be totally brute and stupid, as much as a wheel or a stone: it would continue sluggish and incapable of action, unless actuated by external

But without these the world would have been a mere machine and every thing passive.

force. Second causes could therefore effect nothing which might be imputed to them, but all would be done entirely by the first. We need not say, how much a world thus constituted would be inferior to the present, nor how incommodious and unworthy of its Divine Author.

Objection from those who declare that the understanding is active, tho' necessary, as also God himself.

III. Man, you'll say, necessarily assents to this Proposition, twice two make four; but though his mind is necessarily driven to this assent, and consequently is not *free*, yet he is *active*: for it can scarce be said that a man is passive in giving his assent *. The same may be affirmed of God, who though we suppose him to be absolutely free in his primary elections, yet when these are once fixed, he must necessarily execute what he had decreed; nevertheless he is properly self-active in all cases, consequently there may be something active in nature, though there were nothing free.

Answer to the former part of the objection.

IV. As to the former part of the objection, it is not very clear what may be the efficient cause of intellectual assent; if the object, then the mind is merely passive in the act of understanding: nor is assent imputable to it any more than descent to a stone; but if the object be esteemed only a condition upon which the understanding acts, we shall want a cause to determine the understanding; which cannot be supposed to determine itself, any more than the fire determines itself to burn combustible matter. For nobody judges the combustible matter to be active when it is set on fire, or that the fire burns of itself without being kindled by something else. The world then without liberty will be a piece of mechanism, where nothing moves itself, but every thing is moved by an external cause, and that by another, and so on till we come at the first, namely God; who will be the only self-active

(* See Note 42.)

active Being, and must be esteemed the real cause of all things; neither can any thing, whether well or ill done, be ascribed to others.

V. As to the latter part of the objection, Answer to the latter. That being must be denominated free, who is held by no other tie than his own election: but God is no otherwise obliged to execute his decrees, therefore he is free, if he did but make his decrees freely; and is purely active in every operation wherein he executes them. For he suffers nothing by necessity, nor from any other beside himself, and is determined to act by his own liberty.

VI. Secondly, We believe that God created the world in order to exercise the powers he is possessed of for the good of the universe; the divine goodness therefore delights and applauds itself in its works, and the more any thing resembles God, and the more it is self-sufficient, it is to be esteemed so much the more agreeable to its author. But any one may understand how much a work which moves itself, pleases itself, and is capable of receiving and returning a favour, is preferable to one that does nothing, feels nothing, makes no return, unless by the force of some external impulse: any person, I say, may apprehend this, who remembers what a difference there is between a child caressing his father, and a machine turned about by the hand of the artificer. There is a kind of commerce between God, and such of his works as are endowed with freedom; there is room for covenant and mutual love. For there is some sort of action on both sides, whereby the creature may in some measure return the benefits of the Creator, at least make an acknowledgment for them; and if any thing in the divine works can be conceived to be agreeable to God, this

God has a complacency in his works, and if nothing were free, that would be wanting in them which is most agreeable to the Deity.

must certainly be so*. One such action as this is preferable to all the sportings of matter, or the labyrinths of motion: if there had been no free creatures, God must have been deprived of this complacency, which is almost the only one worthy of him that he could receive from the creation. 'Tis therefore as much agreeable to God that he should have made such beings, as it is to the world that they should be made: for if nothing of this kind had been created, the very best thing among the creatures, and that which is most agreeable to the Deity, would have been wanting. 'Tis better therefore to permit the abuse of liberty in some, than to have omitted so much good. For the defect and absence of such agents is to be esteemed a greater evil, than all the crimes consequent upon the abuse of liberty.

Necessary evils do not always hinder the creation of things, much less those which are only possible.

VII. Thirdly, From what has been said, we learn that some evils which necessarily adhere to things, viz. Natural ones, and those of imperfection, did not hinder the divine goodness from creating the good with which they were connected, since the excess of good compensated for the fewer and less evils which were unavoidable. Thus God chose such animals as were mortal, afflicted with hunger, thirst, and other passions, rather than none at all. If then those evils which were *necessary* and foreseen did not hinder God from creating the good that was annexed to them, how much less should the *possible* evils arising from the abuse of free-will hinder his goodness from creating free agents? To enjoy free choice is a greater good than simple life, but we willingly accept this latter with all the train of natural evils; how much more gratefully should we embrace the gift of liberty, attended only with some danger of evils but not with

(* See Paradise Lost, B. 3. l. 100, &c.)

with the evils themselves, as in the former cases. (61.)

VII. Fourthly, It must be observed that elections are therefore esteemed evil, because they lead us into natural evils. For if an election contain nothing absurd or prejudicial, it is not a wrong one. Hatred of God, rebellion against his commands, murder, theft, lying, are sins, because they deprive us of natural good, and lead to evil. Elections therefore are wrong and undue on account of the natural evils which some times attend them; natural evils then are greater than moral*: for that which makes any thing bad must necessarily be worse itself: but free-will is better than a natural appetite, and a gift more worthy of the Deity, it is not therefore to be denied to the creatures on account of the concomitant evils, any more than the natural appetites and propensities: both of them indeed sometimes lead us into the same evils, but with this difference, that the one, *viz.* the natural appetite, loads us with evils by necessity, but the other, *viz.* free-will, not of necessity, but only if we please. These might have been avoided since they are contingent, but those could not, since they force themselves upon us against our wills: if therefore it was not unworthy of God

Natural evils are greater than moral ones, and free-will a greater good than the natural appetites.

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NOTES.

(61.) In relation to us, indeed, a gift which is attended only with the possibility of some inconveniences, appears to be of more dignity and value than one that brings some degree of unavoidable misery along with it, and as such it ought to be received with proportionable gratitude by us. But with respect to a being who foresees all the abuses of free-will, all the contingent evils consequent thereupon are as certain as the natural and necessary ones, and therefore ought to be equally provided against. This argument therefore about the *contingency* of moral evil, so far as it relates to the Deity, need not be insisted on, since our author allows the divine prescience, and consistently with that, offers reasons sufficient for the vindication of the other attributes of God in the present case.

(* See Chap. 4. §. 4. par. 8. and R. i.)

to create an appetite which was attended with necessary evils; how much more agreeable was it to his goodness to have endowed us with free-will, by which these evils may be avoided, or at least alleviated? If the natural appetite be a greater good than what these evils which flow from it can overbalance, and therefore worthy to be implanted in animals by the Deity; how much more excellent a good, will free-election be, by which alone we become capable of happiness, though joined with the danger of falling into evils by abuse?

The state of man would be worse if free-will were taken away.

IX. Fifthly, If the state of man would be worse without free-will than with it, it is plain that liberty diminishes instead of increasing the sum of evils, and is bestowed upon us for that end. But how much more miserable the state of man would be without liberty than it is with it, will appear to any one who considers what sort of creatures we should be without election. For if man were not free, he would be driven by the violence of matter and motion, and sooner or later be quite overwhelmed with those natural evils which necessarily arise from the nature and laws of motion. But it is better to struggle with some of these with liberty, than all of them with necessity; the former is the condition of men, the latter of brutes*. If by being deprived of election we should be freed from all kind of evil, we might complain of God for giving it; but seeing that whether we be free or bound by the chain of fate (while we have bodies) we must necessarily endure those evils which are consequent upon the afflictions of bodies; (nay those very evils which we were afraid of falling into by a wrong choice) it is in vain to desire the absence of liberty, by relying upon

* Only in some degree. See the observation from Bayle in Note 24.

upon which, and using it aright, we may avoid the most bitter part even of these necessary evils.

X. For in the sixth place, it is most manifest that the greatest good, and that whereby men excel other animals, is owing to liberty. By the assistance of this we rise above fate, and when attacked from without by adverse fortune, we find our happiness within ourselves. Other animals have nothing to oppose to a distemper, death or pain; nothing to delight themselves in, except sleep, food, and the appetite of propagating the species. But a free agent, in the midst of pains and torments, of hunger and thirst, nay death itself, has wherewithal to please itself, and to blunt the edge of all these evils. We complain of our bodies, that by being tied to them, we are obliged to undergo very many and great hardships; how much more full of complaints should we be if we were entirely subjected to them, and hurried into evils without any remedy or relief? Is it not better for us to have our happiness in our own power, than to be obliged to seek it elsewhere, nay rather to despair of it? Which happiness is only to be found in a free choice, as was shewn before. From hence it appears, I hope, sufficiently why God created free agents notwithstanding the abuse which they are liable to. For he chose a creature which would sometimes do amiss, rather than that every thing should be dragged by fate and a chain of necessity, into inevitable evils. (62.)

Free-agents only are capable of perfect happiness, therefore it is better to enjoy liberty.

XI.

NOTES.

(62.) Our author having shewn in Sect. 2. that the greatest part of our happiness consists in this principle of election, here points out some of the many inconveniencies that would attend the loss of it. First, If there was no such thing as a free agent, all would be mere mechanism and necessary effects of the first cause, *i. e.* the best and noblest part of nature would be cut off, that which of all others is most worthy of and agreeable to the Deity. There would be no creatures capable of making any

The benefits of free-will could not be had without a power of sinning.

XI. But you will say, that you desire the pleasure and advantages arising from free elections, but would not have the power to sin; *i. e.* you would have a liberty restrained by nature within certain bounds, so as never to extend to evil. But it may be justly doubted whether this was

NOTES.

kind of return, of paying any reasonable obedience and duty to God; no possibility for him to display his wisdom, goodness and mercy in the government of them, nor any means of bringing them to the sublimest degree of intellectual happiness, *viz.* that which arises from *morality*. Secondly, Those passive beings themselves would be in a much worse condition than they now are. They would be deprived of all the happiness which they now enjoy from the choice of indifferent objects; they would be necessarily exposed to all the natural evils arising from the general laws of matter and motion, *viz.* distempers of the body, inclemency of the seasons, hunger and thirst, &c. which liberty enables them frequently to guard against and avoid, and frequently to bear with pleasure, and even to convert to their superior good: nay, they must inevitably undergo the greatest part of those very evils which at present, by this power, they have at most only a *possibility* of incurring. Thirdly, Without liberty, the other most exalted powers of the mind would be entirely useless, and often aggravations of our misery. "A faculty of understanding (says Dr. *Jenkin* *) without a will to determine it, if left to itself, must always think of the same object, or proceed in a continued series and connection of thoughts without any aim or end; which would be a perpetual labour in vain, and tedious thoughtfulness to no purpose: but if it should be sometimes determined by something external to new objects, yet what use of reason could there be in contemplations, which were merely obtruded and forced upon the mind?" And to foresee a train of evils, without any power of acting against and opposing them, must be only anticipating misery, and adding the future to the present, and sense of our inability of ever helping ourselves to both. These considerations are sufficient to prove, that the want of liberty in general would be an irreparable damage to any conscious system.

For a fuller explication of them see *Jackson's Defence of human liberty*, p. 79, &c. and *Scott's Christian Life*, Part 2. C. 4. Sect. 3. p. 318, &c. 8vo. or *Sherlock on Providence*, C. 7. p. 240. 2d Edit. or *D'Oyly's First Diss.* C. 10. or *Jenkin* in the chapter above cited.

The next enquiry must be, what consequences would attend either the limitation of this free power to some *particular objects*, or the infringement and suspension of it on *particular occasions*.

* *Reasonable*
5th Edit.

* *Christian Relig.* 2d vol. C. 12. p. 238.

was possible in the present state of things: for free-will is naturally an active power, and determines itself to action, and requires nothing more in objects, than that they should give occasion for the exercise of elections; it is therefore active in its own nature. Now whatsoever is limited by another admits of bounds, and is therefore passive with respect to the limiter; it seems equally absurd then for a free agent to be thus limited, as for matter, which is in itself and of its own nature passive, to determine itself to action, and is perhaps no less impossible. (63.)

XII. Secondly, If the will were naturally restrained to choose good only, it must have this restraint either from the *object* or the *understanding*: But neither could be done. If some things were in themselves always good, and others evil,

The will could not be determined to good by objects, since the goodness of them generally proceeds from election.

NOTES.

(63.) If matter were made *active*, it would be no longer *matter*: in like manner if a self-moving or active being were rendered passive, it would be no longer what it now is, nor have the same properties which it now has. Hence appears the absurdity of supposing a liberty, properly so called, to be determined to some particular way of acting, 'tis the same as the liberty of a stone to some particular ways of moving, *i. e.* no liberty at all. The very essence of liberty includes an absolute physical indifference to either side in any given case. Such a liberty as this has been shewn to belong to man in respect of *quilling*. He can will or choose any thing in nature, he can also either choose or refuse any thing, and therefore to determine his will to some objects, or incline it to one side in any given circumstances, would be so far to destroy it. The question then is not, whether a man might be necessarily inclined to some particular thing or act, and yet continue to have free-will; for that, I think, is a contradiction. But whether he should have his power of willing destroyed on some particular occasions, or whether he should be sometimes altered and made what at present he is not. Whether this change of man's nature would in the main prove worthy of the Deity, or beneficial to the world, will be more fully examined in the following subsection: our author proceeds to enquire how this determination could possibly be effected in the present state of things, and if upon enquiry into all the imaginable methods of effecting it, they appear to be either insufficient for the end proposed, or attended with worse consequences than the present establishment, this must be an unanswerable argument against them.

it might be possible indeed that the will should no more admit of evil than the sight does of favours: but moral good and evil are very frequently not absolute things, but merely relative: for there is almost no action which proceeds from choice, but what may be good or evil upon a change of circumstances *. Even natural evils themselves are sometimes good and eligible. Free-will then must needs be indifferent to all external objects, and those things which are now agreeable, become shortly disagreeable, according to the infinite variety of circumstances and the exigence of affairs. The will therefore cannot be determined to good by objects. Nay, to confess the truth, we generally do not choose objects because they are good, but they become good because we choose them. The goodness of them therefore is for the most part determined by the election, and not that by the goodness. For we have shewn before †, that this is the nature of an elective faculty, and such it ought to be, otherwise we could not have the least possibility of attaining happiness in so great variety and uncertainty of outward things ‡.

The Intellect often finds nothing good in things, except that they help towards the attainment of an election, the will therefore could not be determined to good by the understanding.

XIII. Thirdly, The will was no more capable of being determined perpetually to good by the *understanding*, than by objects. For the understanding acts necessarily, and represents nothing as good but what proceeds from objects; if therefore the will were determined by it, it would neither be free, nor always able to please itself. For the understanding often represents all external things as sad and unprosperous, and could never make us take natural evils, such as death, labours, torments, for real good, though it might

* See Turner's *Discourse of the Laws of Nature, and the reason of their Obligation*, Sect. 23, 24. or Puffendorf of the *Laws of Nature*, B. 1. C. 2. Sect. 6.

† Sect. 1. Subject. 3. ‡ See part 16 and 17 of this Sect.

might induce us to bear them in prospect of a farther end. But to endure a thing in view of a farther end, is to undergo present misery in hopes of future happiness; *i. e.* to weigh a present evil against a future good, and of two evils to choose the less; which reason indeed persuades us to do, since it is necessary that it should be done: but this helps nothing towards a vindication of the divine goodness, which has imposed this necessity upon us: nor can he be happy by the judgment of his own understanding, who must undergo these things. But if it be granted that things please us, not because the understanding judges them to be eligible, but because we resolve to exercise our free-will in performing them, even these will become agreeable by election, and the understanding will perceive them to be made so, and not make them to be so. 'Tis not therefore the office of the understanding to govern the will, but to discover means for the attainment of that which is chosen, and to give warning when it chooses such things as are absurd or impossible: for the understanding, as we said before, judges that to be good which is agreeable to our choice, except this lead us into absurdities. In order therefore to avoid absurdities, we make use of the understanding as a monitor, not a master.

And from hence, I think it appears, how inconvenient it would be for the choice to depend in all cases upon the understanding. For since the judgment of the understanding depends upon the objects themselves, and the natural congruity which they bear to the appetites; if the choice were to be determined by its judgment, it is evident that we must necessarily want a great many things which the understanding judges to be good, and could never hope for solid happiness,

ness, (64.) since objects are fixed, as we said before *, and can never answer to our natural appetites in every particular. In order therefore to the attainment of continual happiness, it was necessary that we should be able to please ourselves in some respect, independently of the understanding, and by election to constitute those things good and agreeable to us, which the understanding, if there had been no such election, would have pronounced offensive, disagreeable and painful: from hence it appears how fit it is, that this power should be freed from the government of the understanding; but if it is freed, it could not be determined by it.

The goodness and wisdom of God being equal to his power, hinder him from choosing evils.

XIV. Fourthly, It is to be observed that the divine power is infinite, and that there are innumerable things possible to it which are repugnant to one another, and destructive of each other, and cannot by any means be consistent. If therefore God should act according to the infinity of his power, without any regard to his other attributes, he would effect nothing at all, or else immediately destroy what he had effected. His infinite wisdom and goodness therefore gave

NOTES.

(64.) That is, if every thing which the understanding represented as good in itself, made a *necessary part* of my happiness, I should be always unhappy, since I could never attain to all the good I saw. Whereas by this power of willing, I cut off several of these apparent goods, and only make such be constituent parts of my happiness as I choose; and if I chose only such as I could obtain, I might be always happy. This proposition, *viz. that all good does not make an essential part of our happiness, because we do not will it*, is asserted by Mr. Locke [b.], and well urged as a reason why the greater good does not absolutely determine the mind: and the same, I think, might as justly be affirmed of *pain*, *viz. That the removal of all pain does not make a necessary part of our present happiness, since we do not always absolutely will or desire to remove it*; but on the contrary choose to bear it, and by that choice, often produce a pleasure, which does more than counterbalance it. See C. 5. Sect. 2. and Note 45.

* Sect. 1. Subject. 3. part 2. [b.] Chapter of Power, §. 43.

gave bounds and restraint to his power, which would otherwise confound every thing; and these must of necessity be equally infinite with his power, otherwise infinite evils must certainly arise from infinite power. But a creature, as his elective power necessarily extends farther than his wisdom and goodness, is made naturally liable to fall sometimes into evils. 'Tis well known that mathematicians sometimes suppose a line to be infinite, in which they may take a point wherever they please. Now since our election may be made as we please, the wisdom and goodness whereby it is to be governed, ought to be infinite; for if the line be finite, a point may be pitched upon beyond it: and in like manner, if the goodness and wisdom be finite, the choice may be made without and beyond them, that is, amiss. But since all created wisdom and goodness must necessarily be finite, it follows that there wants a sufficient restraint upon elections, and that every *free* creature is necessarily *defectible*. As then all created beings are necessarily imperfect in general, so every one has its own peculiar defect. And this kind of imperfection, *viz.* the power of sinning, is proper and peculiar to such as enjoy free-will: nor can they be conceived separate from each other, any more than contrariety from motion. (65.)

XV.

NOTES.

(65.) As motion without contrariety would be of no use, so liberty without a power of doing amiss, if such a thing were possible, would be of no value: it would not have the good effects and ends for which liberty was given: particularly it would not be attended with the happy consciousness of *desert*, or the idea of receiving a benefit by way of reward, conferred upon us for having done what was right and good, and what we might as easily have not done. From which idea, as including *self-approbation*, &c. we frequently feel a far more exquisite pleasure, than from the intrinsic value of the benefit itself: nay, without this idea, to be loaded with favours would prove even an uneasiness to a generous mind. This notion will be farther explained and vindicated in the following subsection; for the truth of it we must appeal to the constant experience of the ingenuous part of mankind.

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choose
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his good-
ness and
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neither are
nor can be
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to his
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XV. From hence it appears, that a faculty of pleasing itself by election cannot be determined to good by *objects*, in the same manner as the sight is to light, or taste to flavours, (since goodness is not always an absolute quality in things, like light and the objects of sense) nor by the *understanding*, since many things must be chosen in which the understanding can perceive no manner of good, except that they are capable of being chosen, and when chosen please, because they exercise the faculty. And though the objects of election are not infinite, yet in a finite number there are infinite respects in which good or evil may be produced: there is need then of infinite wisdom and goodness to direct the choice, lest it deviate into evil. Since therefore a creature endowed with wisdom is finite, it is impossible but that it should have a natural power of sometimes choosing wrong.

'Tis better
to be some-
times de-
ceived
with plea-
sure, than
to be al-
ways soli-
citous.

XVI. Fifthly, If the will was confined to the choice of those things only which the understanding declares to be good, or was restrained from choosing till the goodness of the objects were apparent, we must of necessity hesitate in many things and be anxious and solicitous in all. For since things are connected together by a long chain of consequences, it is impossible for us to form a right judgment of the absolute goodness of them; without a foreknowledge of these consequences, we must therefore have been obliged to use all possible disquisition before every election, and suspend the choice where any suspicion of error or ground of doubt should appear: but such a disquisition and continual solicitude would be a greater bar to happiness, than many errors and natural inconveniencies. For if the will can produce good to itself by choosing, the errors and inconveniencies to which it is exposed by a bad choice, may be
com-

compensated by the pleasure which arises from the sense of liberty. But if we were obliged to all possible enquiry, more inconvenience would be felt from that obligation, than from some errors in elections; nor would all of them be by this means avoided; for after all possible examination, a finite understanding may be deceived. Evil elections are to be avoided on account of the uneasiness consequent upon them, if therefore such a disquisition as is necessary to discover the good, and a suspension of the elective faculty till that good be discovered, would bring greater uneasiness than some wrong elections, a man will be more happy with a power of doing amiss, than if he were obliged to wait for the determination of the understanding in every case. For it is better that some persons should sometimes do amiss, and suffer uneasiness from the conscience of having done so, than that all men should in every case be always afraid, uncertain, and solicitous, nay generally cease from all manner of action.

XVII. Such is the nature of our will that it can please itself in election, and by its own power make the things chosen agreeable, though in themselves disagreeable to the appetites. And though this cannot be done at all times, and in every object, yet it is better to run the hazard, than to be deprived of so useful a faculty, or to be restrained from election till an imperfect understanding, such as that of man necessarily is, were clearly convinced of that impossibility. It is therefore convenient for us to derive our peculiar and chief happiness from the will itself; for if it depended on the understanding it would come with difficulty, pains and anxiety, and we could seldom enjoy it pure and unmixed. 'Tis better therefore for us to be able to please ourselves without a long speculation of antecedents and

'Tis better
to be in
danger of
sinning,
than to
cease from
election.

and consequences, though with a danger of sinning, than to cease from election, and be restrained from the exercise of our faculties, till a whole train of these were perfectly apparent, which if it could be at all, yet would not be without pain and anxiety, as any one will find that tries. (66.)

S U B.

NOTES.

(66.) All that *Bayle* objects to this [c.] is taken from the nature of good angels, and glorified souls, who, according to him, are no less happy in themselves, nor perform a less acceptable service to the Deity, for the want of it; and why therefore might not we?—To what was observed about the inclusiveness of all such arguments as are drawn from beings of a different order in note (E) we shall here add, first, That it is more than we are obliged to grant, that either angels or saints in heaven are absolutely devoid of liberty. They may have more clear impressions of good and evil on their minds, more enlarged understandings, fewer and less temptations, &c. without being less free [d.]; nay, they must be in one sense more free, the more they are so qualified [e]. This way of reasoning, therefore, proceeds upon a false, or at least uncertain hypothesis.

Secondly, Though it should be granted that these glorious beings, supposing them all necessary, might have as ample knowledge, as ardent love of the divine perfections, and consequently be as happy in the enjoyment of God and themselves, as if they were all free; though they might have no occasion to see or experience vice, in order to their being fully acquainted with the excellence of virtue, and made sensible of the infinite wisdom, power and goodness of the Deity, shewn in the government and suppression of the former, and in the production and improvement of the latter: though, I say, these exalted beings could be supposed to have a thorough intuition of all the attributes of God without any such manifestation of them in his works; (against which notion see *D'Oyly's First Diff. C. 8: and Conclusion*, p. 123.) yet it does not seem possible for such imperfect creatures as we are, to attain unto this excellent knowledge, and enjoy the happy effects of it on any other terms than the present. We could not sure have had so lively an idea of the mercy of God, if there had never been any proper objects of it. We could not have been so thoroughly conscious of our dependency or danger; nor had so grateful a sense of our constant support, our frequent deliverances; nor consequently have arrived to so great a degree either of virtue or happiness in this life or the next, by any other method; as will be further shewn in

[c.] See his *Answer to the Queries of a Provincial, and Crit. Diss. Article Marcionites*, Remark F. &c.

[d.] See *Archbishop Dawes's 5th Sermon*. p. 73, 74. and the latter end of Note Q.

[e.] See the beginning of Note 72.

SUBJECT. III.

Why God does not interpose his Omnipotence, and occasionally restrain the Will from depraved Elections.

I. **T**IS evident from what has been said, More and greater evils would arise from thence, than from the abuse of free-will. that it was agreeable to the Divine Goodness to have created free agents, for without these the system of nature would have been imperfect: nor could their actions have been determined to good by any natural propensity or limitation, in the same manner as the senses are limited by objects: but yet it is certain that they depend upon God for their actions, and if he should suspend his influence, they would not act at all. Since therefore he could so easily hinder the abuse of liberty, why does he suffer it? Why does he not restrain elections when they tend to vice and absurdity? We grant that this objection cannot be satisfactorily answered, otherwise than by shewing that more and greater evils would befall the universe from such an interposition, than from the abuse of free-will. In order to which it is to be considered,

II. In the first place, That this cannot be effected without *Violence done to Nature*. 'Tis allowed that elections ought to be free, and that thinking beings cannot otherwise be hap-

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py: It would be as much violence to prevent the action of free-will, as the motion of the sun.

NOTES.

in notes 79 and 81. Either then these happy beings are still perfectly free, which freedom constitutes the greatest part of their happiness; and let any man try to prove the contrary; or at least they once were so, in order to their greater perfection, and are now only altered by being translated into another state, and put out of farther trial; and consequently they belong to our author's third expedient, which will be examined in subject. 5.

py: God himself in creating them has determined, as it were by a law, that they should be free. For by giving them a nature endowed with choice, he allowed them to make use of it. They cannot therefore be hindered without violence done to the laws of the creation. I grant that God can dispense with the laws of nature; but who will require or allow this to be done frequently? The bounds of this world, and the number of thinking beings are unknown to us, but we believe that the system of nature will endure for ever. Now as all things depend upon the will of God, we cannot have any other security of our happiness, and of the duration of the world, than the divine constancy and immutability: the universal laws of nature are the assurances of this constancy, and upon them does the security and happiness of the whole work depend. It is not therefore to be expected that God should lightly dispense with these laws, much less alter them by his omnipotence every moment. Since then it is provided by an universal law, that free agents should procure to themselves happiness by the use of election, and it is impossible but that these, being left to themselves, should sometimes fall into depraved elections; would it not be an infringement and a violation of this law, if God should interpose and hinder the use of that faculty which by the law of nature he had established? We don't expect that the situation of the earth, or course of the sun, should be altered on our account, because these seem to be things of great importance, and we apprehend it to be unreasonable, that for our private advantage the order and harmony of things should be changed, to the detriment of so many beings. But to alter the will, to stop election, is no less a violation of the laws of nature, than

to interrupt the course of the sun. For a free agent is a more noble being than the sun, the laws of its nature are to be esteemed more sacred, and not to be changed without a greater miracle. There would then be a kind of shock and violence done to nature, if God should interfere and hinder the actions of free-will; and perhaps it would prove no less pernicious to the intellectual system, than the sun's standing still would be to the natural. His goodness therefore does not suffer him to interpose, except when he foresees that the evils arising from our depraved elections are greater than those which would ensue upon an interruption of the course of nature, which he only can know who knows all things. (67.)

III.

NOTES.

(67.) By this last concession our author evidently allows that God may sometimes have sufficient reason to interpose in matters relating to our elections; (though perhaps he never acts upon the will by *physical impulse*, or irresistibly; which will be considered in the next subsection.) His design therefore is only to shew that this ought not to be done frequently, or as often as men choose amiss. Now this may be illustrated in the same manner as we treated of the laws of motion. That there are general mechanic laws in the natural world, the establishment and preservation whereof tends more to the happiness of the creation, and is every way more worthy of the Deity, than to act always by *particular wills*, was shewn in note 29. If these laws were frequently altered and unfixed, they would cease to be laws, and all action, and contrivance which depends upon the stability, and computes the future effects of them, must cease, or at least prove insignificant. In like manner *liberty* has been proved to be an universal law of intellectual beings, and the great use and excellence of it evinced, and therefore we have equal reason to suppose that it could not be, at least not frequently, suspended, without as great inconvenience as would attend the violation of these laws of mechanism. If this were done in the rational world, all studies, enterprises, arguments, all kind of reasoning and policy would be in vain and useless; all rewardable action, and its concomitant happiness (of which in note 65 and more below) must entirely cease. Nay, perhaps to deprive a rational being of free-will, would be altogether as absurd and inconvenient, as to endow a machine with reflection, or an edifice with self motion. But our great ignorance of the intellectual world must render any

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III. Secondly, Such an interruption as this would not only do violence to nature, but quite invert the method of treating free agents. This method is to hinder or excite elections by rewards and punishments: to divert them from unreasonable or absurd things, and draw them to better by the persuasion of reason. But it is doubtful whether the nature of the thing will permit an election to be determined by impulse, or as it were by immediate contact. For it seems equally absurd to attempt a change of election by any other means than those above mentioned, as to desire to stop the motion of matter by intreaty, or offering rewards. May we not with the same reason expect that matter should be moved by rewards and punishments, as the will influenced by *physical impulse*, as they call it? For it is by these means that they would have God to stop or alter the choice. So preposterous an interposal would confound every thing, and leave nothing certain in nature. How fatal such an experiment would be, and how it would affect the minds of the observers, or what suspicions concerning God and their own security, it might suggest to the whole system of thinking beings, God only knows. We see that human laws cannot be dispensed with, without very many inconveniencies, which yet, as they are made upon an imperfect

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argument of this kind very uncertain. However, thus much we are sure of, that so great violence done to the will, would be directly contrary to the general method of God's treating reasonable creatures, and quite opposite to the end of all those manifestations he has made of his nature and will; the very reverse of all those arguments, exhortations, promises and threats, which are the subject of revealed religion: a man that believes any thing of these (upon the belief of which I am now arguing) can never imagine that they are all made use of to no purpose, as they must be in a great measure, if the will could be over-ruled occasionally without any considerable inconvenience. This is what our author endeavours to prove in the following paragraph.

imperfect foresight, and can provide for few cases, seem naturally to require some interposál: how much greater evils may we apprehend from a dispensation with the divine, the natural laws, on the observance of which the good of the whole depends? This seems to be the reason why God makes use of so much labour and pains, so great an apparatus of means, (68.) so many precepts, persuasions, and even entreaties for the amendment of mankind; which nevertheless he could effect in a moment, if he were pleased to apply force; and he would undoubtedly do it, if he had not foreseen more inconveniencies from a change in the order of nature, and violence done to elections.

IV. Thirdly, That which gives us the greatest pleasure in elections, is a consciousness that we could have not chosen; without this it is no choice at all: but such is the nature of us rational beings, that nothing pleases us but what we choose. In order therefore to make any thing agreeable to us, it is necessary for us to be *conscious* that we choose it voluntarily, and could have refused it: but if God determine our election extrinsically, the most agreeable part

He would take away that which is the most agreeable to us in elections, viz. a consciousness that we might have not chosen.

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(68.) The history of the *Jewish* nation affords good instances of this. What an apparatus of outward means was continually made use of in the government of that stiff-necked people? What frequent murmurings, rebellions and apostasies were permitted, and then punished? What numerous miracles, both of the remunerative and vindictive kind, were applied, in order to bring them to some tolerable sense of their dependence on God, and a suitable practice of the duties resulting from it? All which would have been, at least, unnecessary, if one miracle exerted on their minds could have done the business; if their understandings could as well have been illuminated, and their wills reformed at once; and if their practice produced by this means, and as it were extorted from them, would have been equally agreeable to the Deity. In this, as well as many other respects, they seem to have been types and representatives of all mankind.

of all is taken away. (T.) For we must either be conscious that God determines our will or not;

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(T.) 'Tis objected, that this explication of free-will makes *Adam* more unreasonable in the state of innocence than his posterity are in the state of corruption. For, according to this, it would have grieved him to think that his choosing right was due to God's assistance, and that he would not have believed himself happy, if when he was ready to break God's command, he had perceived that God by his grace had interposed and enabled him to resist the temptation. Whereas in truth, such a discovery would have made him, as it must make us, more happy, tying him by a new obligation to acknowledge the sovereign goodness of God, and on that account to love and adhere to him the more closely. But it is alledged, that the author is absolutely of another opinion.

I answer, the objector may assure himself, the author has no such opinion, nor is there any thing like it in the book, or that can be deduced from it. What the author says is, that God has made man an intelligent creature, capable of pleasing himself by choice; that the proper way to move his will is by rewards and punishments, as the proper way to move bodies is by physical impulse; that in the ordinary course of things it is as improper, and perhaps as impracticable, to move the will by any other force than that of rational motives, as to attempt to move a body by rewards and punishments: that there is this difference between them, that a body necessarily moves when impelled, but the will is not necessitated by the moral motives proposed to it. That there are two sorts of goods which may be proposed to a man, one that arises from the convenience of things to our natural appetites, and is antecedent to choice, and another that is founded in the choice itself, and consequent to it; and that the first is subordinate to the second.

When therefore these two interfere, the former gives place to the latter: and hence we see many men prefer their choice even to life, which is the greatest natural good, tho' 'tis true, this is done with difficulty and reluctance. But when there is no such interfering between the choice and appetites, there the man is entirely free, and can make the thing chosen good without mixture; which happens in a thousand instances of life, and therefore there is much more good than evil in it.

As to *Adam*, he was placed in this state of freedom because his nature required it; and the author believes God might have prevented his choosing amiss, if he would have altered his nature, motives and circumstances; that is, made a new world for him, and left this without intelligent inhabitants. I do not deny but God may stop man from executing his choice, when he is ready to make an ill one; for no body ought to presume to limit the Divine Power. But I say, when a free agent is ready to make an ill choice, and would do it if not prevented by an Almighty Power, he is already guilty in the sight of God; such a readiness is an obliquity in his will and a moral evil; and therefore God is not obliged to prevent the execution of it;

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not; if we be conscious, how can that be agreeable which is obtruded on us by force? If we be not,

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for that were to prevent the punishment, though the guilt be contracted: and it is easy to see, what the consequence of such a procedure might be in a world that is to be governed by rewards and punishments; and what effect it might have on those innumerable myriads of intelligent beings that are under the government of God, and that are all now virtuous by their choice, and thereby justly distinguished in their rewards and improved circumstances, and possessed of that most valuable perfection and only moral good, an active conformity to the will of God. Whereas if the will of man were necessitated and held by an irresistible force from choosing amiss, the whole intellectual creation would be let loose, and under no kind of moral obligation to concern themselves about their choices; and so there could only be a passive conformity to God's will, and no room for virtue or holiness, which are the most valuable goods in the world; and hence to avoid some moral evil, there would be no room left for any moral good.

But secondly, God may be conceived to have permitted *Adam* to fall not only for the reasons above, but likewise because it was better for him upon the whole than if he had been kept from the act of guilt by an invisible force. He had no reason to presume this, but the power of God is so great that he brought good out of evil, and made *Adam's* state after his fall more advantageous to him than innocence had been. This is plain from scripture, that prefers our state under the second *Adam* to what it was under the first. And as it was better for *Adam* himself, so it is not certain but it was best for his posterity. For some of them it undoubtedly was, I mean those that are found in Christ: and as to the rest, it doth not appear but all things considered it was as good for them too. We have a notion that if *Adam* had not fallen all his posterity would have continued innocent, and been free from all natural inconveniencies; but the author shews that neither the holy scriptures, nor the Catholic church has determined either of them; nor is it said how every one that was to be born would have used his free-will if he had been tried, nor that even those who used it right would have been subject to no natural evil. And therefore 'tis a very uncertain argument that is drawn from these suppositions, and ought not to be opposed to the goodness of God.

But lastly, however this matter stand, it is to be supposed that it was best for the whole that things should be as they are, and that the hindering man from falling by an irresistible force would have been more mischievous in general than his sin. We know that God, as the author observes, is to govern an innumerable multitude of creatures to all eternity; and he only can comprehend, what influence an action may have on that system in infinite ages. It has been shewn, that there is a community and connection amongst them all, and each is or may be affected

not, we are deceived in the operations of our own minds; neither can we know whether the elections, be our own or God's. Nay the force of laws, together with the efficacy of rewards and punishments, would be quite destroyed, For who would regard laws or rewards, when he

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with what his fellow-creature doth or suffers; and it is impossible for any but God to be a judge of this. We see that in the greatest number imaginable, if we change but one unit after a few multiplications and divisions, the whole product is entirely altered. The same might happen in the world, in an infinite series of mutations, if any one action were changed: it must be of great consequence to the whole, if God should interpose and alter any the minutest thing; and perhaps change the whole original scheme. If therefore that scheme was at first contrived to the best advantage of those creatures of which it consisted, to alter any thing in it would certainly make it worse; if it had not been best for the whole that man should be permitted to fall, God would not have done it; and if it was best, he ought not to alter it. Free creatures were wanted to the perfection of the world, that is, such creatures as being essentially short of perfection were capable of choosing amiss. And to make them thus free, and absolutely hinder the use of that freedom, appeared a greater evil than the fall of a few: for that would have defeated the very end of their being made free agents, which was, that they might make themselves happy by choosing right. Thus good men here are happy; the blessed in heaven; and all the holy angels; so far as we know of them.

But it is urged, could not God have determined their wills to good, and neither let them, nor any other creature, know it, and then the ill effects which could be apprehended from the example might have been avoided? The meaning of this expedient, so far as I can understand it, is, that God should have deceived and cheated all rational creatures at once; and though he had given them faculties to discern truth from falsehood, yet he should have obliged them all to believe a lie. Sure he delights in treachery and falsehood that can suggest such an expedient.

But suppose God should deceive men and angels, and make them believe that they choose when really they do not, but their wills are secretly determined; yet this would not obtain the end, or supply the use of free choice, or yield the pleasure which is the result of it. For it is not, as observed before, the belief of our being free that gives us the pleasure, but the true and right use of the faculty: though a man believe never so firmly that he sees or knows a thing, yet if his faculty of sight or knowledge were not really exercised, he would neither have the use, nor the pleasure of them. And at the same rate if a man have not the exercise of his choice, he will neither have the use nor the satisfaction arising from it,

he was certain that God would hinder him from doing any thing which might occasion the loss of rewards, or make him incur the punishments? But however this be, it is very certain that our greatest pleasure, nay our very reward, consists in being conscious that we have used our choice aright, and done those things which we might not have done. On the other hand, it is the greatest grief and affliction to have omitted such things as would have tended to our happiness, and were in our power: one of these could not be had without the other, and if none were suffered to grieve for a bad election, none would rejoice for a good one. But it is better that some few should grieve for their own folly, than that all should be deprived of the rewards of their good actions. That privilege then of doing well, and pleasing ourselves in what is well done, could not be had without the hazard of sinning; if God should take away the one, the other would vanish of itself.

But you would have the pleasure which arises from election without the danger; that is, the end without the means: neither do you observe that the greatest pleasure in this case is, that you could have done otherwise: and this arises from the very nature of pleasure, which seems to be nothing else but *a sense of the exercise of those faculties and powers which we enjoy*. The more therefore any action is *ours*, the more it pleases us; and since a free action (which we could either exert or omit) is the most of all ours, it must necessarily please us most: but if the will were confined to one side, or detained from the other, the action would cease to be ours, and the pleasure would perish together with the sense of liberty. A mind conscious of virtue is the pleasure and reward of good actions, but unless it were possible for it to be-

become conscious of vice, 'tis plain it could not be conscious of virtue. (69.)

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(69.) In opposition to what our author has here advanced, Bayle [d.] brings a great many arguments drawn from the tenets of *Calvinists*, *Spinozists*, &c. who believe that all their actions are necessarily determined, and yet are no less pleased with them. Nay some, says he, rejoice in this very thing, that they are under the absolute direction of the Deity. *Dii me tuentur*—[e.] to be *naturally* determined to the best was always looked upon as a peculiar happiness, and they that came nearest it were esteemed the best men; as the known compliments to *Cato* and *Fabricius* declare. Some are as well pleased with what they have by lot or inheritance, as what they get by their own labour: witness the pride of ancient families, &c. *Gaudeant bene nati*, is a common proverb; and among the things, *que vitam faciunt beatiorum*, *Martial* reckons *res non parva labore, sed relicta*. And again: If, says he, we did take delight in choosing this, yet it would be enough for us if God concealed his determination from us, and we only believed that we were free to choose and act.

We need not, I think, spend much time in answering such arguments as these. For the *Calvinists*, &c. notwithstanding all their absurd tenets, have evidently this consciousness of choice within them, which is the secret source of the pleasure that attends their actions, and cannot be extinguished by any of their principles, but overcomes them all; and constantly puts these men upon such endeavours as are vain and useless upon the supposition, and inconsistent with the belief of fate and absolute predestination: which shews us that these notions are neither acted upon in life, nor pursued to their utmost consequences; that they rest in pure speculation, and are generally laid aside in practice; in short, that they are absolutely inconsistent with human nature, as well as human reason.

Secondly. Some persons may rejoice in being under the particular care, protection and government of the Deity; but then their joy proceeds not so much from a bare contemplation of what the Deity does for them, as from considering *on what account* he does it, *viz.* because they are agreeable to him, and proper objects of his favour; and that on account of something which they *themselves* have done. If *Horace* meant otherwise by his *Dii me tuentur*, he had small reason for what he adds in the next line, *Diis pietas mea & Musa cordi est*. But in truth this and most other of *Bayle's* testimonies are rhetorical or poetic flourishes, rather than philosophic truths, and consequently not worth a serious examination. To draw any thing like an argument from another's words, we should at least be sure of his determinate meaning; of the precise number of his ideas, as well as the justness of their connection together; which we must never expect from such kind of random quotations. It may not therefore be improper to observe here once for all, that *Bayle's* usual

[d.] Answer to the Queries of a Provincial, p. 665. Fol.

[e.] Hor. B. 1. Ode 17.

You may urge, that you had rather want this pleasure than undergo the danger; that is, you had

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usual method of reasoning from authorities must be very weak and unphilosophical; and calculated rather to blind men's eyes, than to inform their understandings.

Thirdly, We are pleased indeed with what we call *good fortune*, when a great sum of money comes to us by lot, or a large estate, or a title by inheritance; and are perhaps the more delighted, the greater the change is in our circumstances, and the less expectation we had of it [*f.*] But is this pleasure comparable to that intellectual or moral pleasure; that sublime satisfaction and complacency, which we feel upon acquiring a like sum of money by some laudable act, or egregious undertaking, that may properly be called *our own*? Is it equal to that solid comfort, and self-approbation which every ingenuous mind is sensible of from his doing what *deserves* an estate or title; and receiving these as the proper recompence and tribute due to such deeds? The man that can value himself more upon his descent from an ancient family, than upon being by these means the founder of a new one, is a disgrace to his descent, and unworthy of the arms he bears.—But to return:

There is undoubtedly an agreeable and exalted consciousness attending all the blessings which we ourselves are instrumental in procuring, infinitely beyond all the satisfaction which they could afford us, if we knew ourselves to be unconcerned in the attainment, and unworthy of the enjoyment of them. This is the great spur and incitement to many noble actions here, and will be part of the crown and reward of them hereafter; (as is illustrated at large by *Scott* in the first vol. of his *Christian Life*, and by *Jenkin*, in his *Reasonableness of Christianity*, 2d vol. C. 12. prop. 2.) And tho' we cannot properly *merit* any thing at the hand of God; yet the consciousness of having performed such actions as are in themselves acceptable to, and rewardable by him, and of receiving blessings from him in return for such actions; must very much increase our happiness in the enjoyment of these blessings, both in this world and the next; (as is shewn in the same places.) Nor lastly, could we receive this pleasure which now results from our choice and action, if we were determined in every thing by the Deity, supposing that determination concealed from us, and we only made to believe that we were really free to choose and act. For, as our author observes, this would be to arrive at the end without the means, and to have the effect without the cause. All our ideas of merit arise from, and are entirely founded in *free choice*: this (as far as we can apprehend) is the necessary medium to such moral happiness; and we can no more conceive how one should come without the other, than how we should see without eyes: and for us to have this pleasure, though another did the action, would be the same as for one man to be conscious of his doing what some other really did; or for him to see by some other's eyes.

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[*f.*] See Note 19.

had rather be a brute than a man; neither could you by this means avoid these natural evils which you dread so much as foolishly to wish yourself a brute, lest you should fall into them. But supposing it were convenient for you to be a brute, yet it could not be convenient for all nature: the system of the universe required free agents: without these the works of God would be lame and imperfect; his goodness chose the benefit of the universe rather than that of yourself; especially when this is better for you too, tho' you should be so ungrateful as not to confess it.

Free Agents are placed as it were out of the

V. Fourthly, As it would be prejudicial to man, to all nature, for God to hinder bad elections by his absolute power, so nothing can be conceived to be more disagreeable to himself.

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Such suppositions as these would breed endless confusion. For we must either know whether another did this action or not; if we do know this, then how can we attribute that to ourselves, or pride ourselves in that, which we know belongs to another? If we do not know this, then how can we attribute to ourselves, or please ourselves in any thing? Since every thing in and about us may, for what we know, be done by another; and so we in reality may never deserve either praise or blame. The natural consequence of which is, that we might as well never aim at desert, or strive to do any thing at all: and this is the genuine product of all such sceptical suppositions as question the veracity of our faculties; and would make us suspect that we may be imposed upon even in the regular operations of our own minds. The same argument with those of *Bayle*, as well as the like method of reasoning, are made use of by the author of the *Philosophical Enquiry*, p. 98, &c. and p. 71, 72. Where he thinks, "It may not be improper to observe, that some of the pleasures man receives from objects are so far from being the effect of choice, that they are not the effect of the least premeditation, or any act of his own; as in finding a treasure on the road, or in receiving a legacy from a person unknown to him." But has a man the same pleasure in these cases as if he had done something to *deserve* a treasure of the public; or had the legacy conferred on him as a reward for his good deeds to the deceased person, his late loved beneficiary, or intimate friend? If this author can find a difference in these two cases, this observation of his must be improper: if he cannot, I am sure he has a different sense of things from the rest of mankind, and of consequence is not to be argued with.

We have said that God made the world, in order to have something wherein to exercise his attributes externally: but since he has several attributes, he cannot exercise them all in every thing alike. His power therefore exerts itself chiefly in one thing, and his wisdom and goodness in another. He exercised his power in creating the world, and putting it into motion; his goodness and wisdom in the order and agreement of things: but the divine *wisdom* seems to have set apart the government of *free agents* as its peculiar province. Herein it fully exerciseth itself, and acts up to its infinity; for if it were finite it would not be equal to so great a task. It does not seem a very extraordinary thing for God to be able to govern and absolutely direct such beings as are merely passive, and deprived of all motion of their own, whereby they might make any resistance. For those things obey easily which do not move but when they are moved. Neither is there need of infinite wisdom to govern them; for infinite power, with a moderate use of wisdom, would have been sufficient. That there might be a subject therefore whereon the infinite wisdom of God should display itself, he created free agents; which, being as it were put out of his power and left to themselves, might act in a manner independent of his will. 'Tis evident to any person how much more difficult it is, and how much greater exercise of wisdom it requires to direct a multitude of these to a certain end, and make them conspire to the common good, than to order brute beasts, and such as have no power of themselves, in what manner you please. To them that consider the vast multitude of free agents, which is almost infinite, and their independence (since every one is, at least in many cases, absolute master of his

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his own actions, and is permitted by God to act according to that liberty) God seems to have given a specimen of the extent of his wisdom, which is able thus certainly and effectually to bring to the end proposed, so many free spirits, so many agents that were in a manner set at liberty from his dominion, and committed every one to his own government. Here is the proper place for wisdom, wherein (setting aside, and in a manner suspending the exercise of his power) he attains his ends by prudence only, by mere dexterity of acting, and brings it to pass that so many jarring wills depending on themselves alone, and no more inclined to either side by the divine power, than if there were no such thing, shall yet conspire together to promote the good of the universe. 'Tis impossible that this exercise of wisdom should not be very agreeable to the Deity, if any thing in his works may be esteemed agreeable to him. But if he were obliged to interfere with his power, it would seem to argue a defect of wisdom; for what occasion is there for him to interpose and stop the liberty of election before granted, if his wisdom could provide sufficiently for the good of the whole without altering his plan*?

It would therefore be neither agreeable to God, nor useful to us, that God should always hinder bad elections.

VI. From hence it seems sufficiently evident why God would not interpose his power, or intermeddle with our elections, since that could neither be advantageous to ourselves nor to the whole system, nor agreeable to God. 'Tis no wonder then that absolute goodness permits evil elections, since for the most part they could not be prevented without greater evils. But if that can ever be done, there's no doubt but

* See *Jenkin*, 2d Vol. C. 32. p. 240, &c. 5th Edit.

but God will take care that the very best shall be done. (70.)*

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(70.) What has been urged in the foregoing subsection about the Divine Interposition in human elections must be understood in a limited sense, *viz.* as relating only to an *immediate* influence, or an absolute determination of the will, *i. e.* to such an intermeddling with elections as would make them to be no elections at all. For it appears from the following subsection, that our author did not intend to exclude all kind of interposition in the government of free agents, but only that particular sort which would subvert their natural powers, or be destructive of their freedom. Though God has established general laws both in the animate and inanimate world, yet he has not left these entirely to themselves; but influences, directs, and governs them in such a manner, as is most conducive to the great end for which he designed them; which end could not always be attained without such a particular influence, as will be shewn below. In determining the *manner* of this government we must beware of the two extremes of supposing either first, that the Deity always influences second causes or acts (as *Malebranch* terms it) by *particular wills*, in the natural or moral world; which would dissolve all laws of nature, destroy the liberty of the creature, and reduce every thing to fate: or secondly, that he never interposes in the government of either world, but lets the general laws of mechanism or of liberty take their natural course, and operate as it were independently of himself; which would entirely destroy a *particular Providence*, and render the *general* one in a great measure useless. The bad consequences which would attend the former of these schemes have been touched upon above: the latter (which is particularly espoused by *Leibnitz* in his *System of Pre-established Harmony*, and by *Whiston* in his *New Theory of the Earth*) will be obviated in the following subsection. I shall here only add the opinion of *Colliber* on the present subject;

" [J.] 'Twas highly suitable to the Divine Wisdom in the government of the world, both to pre-ordain some of the principal events with relation to the entire human community, or to the more considerable parts of it, and to reserve to himself a right of interposing and influencing particular agents, as in other cases, so more especially in order to the accomplishment of these events. That he has actually done so, is abundantly clear from scripture prophecies, and histories. And that in so doing he has acted in a manner most worthy his wisdom, is no less manifest. For hereby it appears, that the divine government is equally opposed to chance and destiny. Had the Deity taken no care of futurity, but left every man to the conduct of his own inclinations, and natural effects in general to the influence of their causes, without ever interposing to direct them to the attainment of his great design; this would have been almost in effect to divest himself of the government of rational agents, and to subject their affairs to chance, and to

S U B S E C T. IV.

Concerning the Efficacy of Prayer.

Devout
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change
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prayers.

I. **S**OME may apprehend that God is not so averse from interposing immediately in the affairs of this world as is here asserted; and that the laws and order of nature are not of so great consequence with him, but that he may be easily and frequently induced to dispense with them, contrary to what we have here advanced. Nay, this seems to be the common opinion of mankind. Every supplicant that addresses himself to God, believes that this is effected by the Deity through his prayers: if he perceived it to be otherwise, he could hope for nothing from the prayers he offers to the Deity. For if all came to pass according to the natural order of things, and the series of causes, who could

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“ to the hazard of the utmost disorder and confusion. Or had
 “ he on the contrary absolutely or fatally determined every
 “ event, tho’ this would have been far enough from divesting
 “ himself of the government of the world, yet it would have
 “ been a government unworthy of the Deity; a government
 “ entirely exclusive of all proper sin and punishment, virtue and
 “ rewards: wherein himself would in effect have been the only
 “ agent, and all the creatures stupid and passive. Whereas, by
 “ pre-ordaining the most material events, and suffering the crea-
 “ tures freely to exert their faculties in all convenient cases; he
 “ appears most wisely to have chosen the middle way, and there-
 “ by to have equally avoided the mischiefs of both extremes.”
 See also p. 116.

All the difference between this writer and our author is, that in the government of the world he supposes the general law of liberty to be sometimes suspended, as well as the laws of motion. Whereas our author, though he asserts the same of the latter, yet he denies it of the former; at least does not grant that such an abridgment of liberty is necessary to the aforesaid government: how on this principle he accounts for that which we generally mean by a *particular providence*, answering the prayers, and thereupon often influencing the affairs of mankind, will be shewn in its proper place.

could hope to be delivered from a distemper or calamity; from evil affections or temptations, by virtue of prayer? These things are either effected by the immediate interposition of the divine power, or ~~are~~ requested of God in vain. For if they depend upon their own proper causes, which may not be altered, those causes would produce their effects as well upon the omission as the offering of these supplications. But if God sometimes vouchsafes to suspend or change the order and laws of nature to gratify his votaries; why may not the same be done to prevent the abuse of free-will and natural evils? Either this interposition must be admitted in order to oppose these evils, or it must be rejected with regard to prayers. This difficulty deserves an answer. We attempt to solve it in the following manner.

II. 'Tis to be observed then, in the first place, ^{God does not hear all prayers.} that all *prayers* are not heard by God, nor do we hope that all things shall be done which are requested of him, but only such as he has declared to be agreeable to his will, and has in some respect promised to perform. Those things then which are unnecessary, trifling, inconsistent, hurtful, or petitioned for in an unlawful manner, are not to be expected by the petitioners, though they be requested never so frequently.

III. Secondly, God may be under a two-fold obligation to his creature, first from his goodness, whereby he is obliged so to order all external things, that existence shall be better than non-existence to all who duly perform their duty. Secondly, By some covenant or agreement whereby he engaged, under certain conditions, to bestow some favours upon men, notwithstanding they were sinners: Which covenant, tho' it may not be esteemed a natural one,

God is obliged to the creatures, by his goodness and by covenant.

yet it cannot be judged to be against nature, or to offer violence to it.

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things.

IV. Thirdly, The things which are requested of God either belong to the mind, *viz.* that the mind be sound and vigorous, and able to govern the affections, &c. or to the body, that life and strength be prolonged, &c. or to external things, that the weather be serene and seasonable for the fruits of the earth, &c. Now these differ from each other, and ought not to be prayed for under the same conditions.

God does
not give
assistance
to our
minds at
random,
but under
as certain
laws as
those of
the natural
world.

V. Fourthly, As to the mind, since the elective power is the chief part of man, and is self-motive, 'tis scarce conceivable how it should be determined from without itself. For that which determines itself is entirely different from that which stands in need of another to move it, and these appear to be no more applicable to the same thing, than a square and circular figure are to the same surface, at least their natures must be changed to make them compatible. But yet this faculty, as well as others, may be vitiated by abuse and a perverse manner of acting, and when it is thus vitiated, 'tis probable that God only can restore it, for it is supposed to be subject to him alone.

This assistance must be afforded to mankind in such a manner that no blemish be thereby cast upon the divine constancy, nor any prejudice done to his wisdom in establishing the laws and order of nature. Now that all kind of interposition does not prejudice these, appears from hence, *viz.* that it is most worthy of the divine majesty to have reserved to himself a power over nature, especially while the beings over whom this power is reserved enjoy their liberty; it seems not only proper that God should be at liberty to act in this manner with them, but also necessary, provided this be not done at random,

random, but under some known and certain condition. And here the divine wisdom has exerted itself in a wonderful manner, and devised a way to reconcile the constancy of God, and the sanctity of the laws of nature, with that assistance which is occasionally afforded to mankind upon their request. Man might presume upon some method of effecting this before revelation, but 'tis to this alone that we owe the clear and undoubted manifestation of it. From hence we learn that God will give his *Holy Spirit*, under some certain laws and conditions, to those that are fitly disposed: which would be as certain and constant a principle of spiritual actions to them that are endowed with it, as nature itself is of the natural. Since therefore this Spirit by its grace assists our depraved will, and in some respect restores it to its vigour, it cannot be judged to violate the order of nature, any more than when its influence sustains natural causes. If it be asked what those laws are, under which the influence of this Spirit is promised; I answer, all such things as are necessary to salvation are promised to them who make a right use of their present abilities,---that pray to God through *Christ* for an increase of them,---and that celebrate the *sacraments* as the law of God requires. Upon these conditions this Spirit descends into the minds of men, and by its holy inspiration forms them to piety.

VI. The giving of this Spirit, and obtaining it by Christ, was a most miraculous work of divine power, but the operations of it, since they are now produced according to fixed laws and a settled order, as regularly and constantly as the works of nature, cannot be reckoned a *miracle* any more than these are: For I call a miracle a sensible operation of God, which is

The aid
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performed in a way contrary to nature; and as it happens beyond all certain and fixed order, it proves God to be the immediate cause and author: But the interposition of the divine power exerted about the will is not an interposition of this kind; for it is done, as we said, according to a certain rule and order, and therefore cannot be miraculous. I confess that this is indeed an exception from the general law of free agents, (71.) but it is no less regular than the

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(71.) He does not mean that this is an exception from the law of their *liberty*, as appears from what immediately follows: but from their being left entirely to themselves, or to the casual impressions of those external objects and agents which surround them; from their acting solely upon principles of their own formation or discovery, and following the guidance of their natural understanding, without any internal assistance: which seems to be the general law of this their present state of probation. The *Holy Ghost* then, according to our author, does not subvert and supersede; but rather strengthen, preserve and perfect our natural freedom; it repairs the breaches made therein by the violence of temptations, by the force of evil habits; it counterbalances the influence of evil spirits, and restores the mind to its native *equilibrium*, or indifference. How these effects may be supposed to be produced in us, and of what kind the influence of the *Holy Ghost*, of good and evil angels is, will be considered by and by. We shall first give the opinion of an author or two concerning what the *Holy Spirit's* operations are *not*, or that they cannot be in any respect destructive of our natural powers.

"In the first place, The manner of the Spirit's operation is not inconsistent with the nature of mankind; (which says *Stebbing*) is a truth so fully and so liberally granted by all parties, that nothing needs to be said to prove it. Now man we know is an *intelligent* and *rational* being, able to discern between good and evil; he has also such a *freedom or liberty* of *will* as makes him accountable to God for his behaviour in this life. By consequence the Spirit must not be supposed to operate in such a manner as not to make the least use of the understanding, nor must it be so far inconsistent with freedom and liberty, as that a man's actions may not properly be called his own. [t.] Again, "Such is the manner of the Spirit's operations, that they do not make our own care and diligence after virtue and godliness unnecessary; but that on the other hand the operations of the Spirit will do us no good, if our own endeavours be wanting. Thirdly, He does not

[t.] *Treatise Concerning the Operations of the Spirit*, C. 7. p. 123. 8vo.

the law itself, nor any more repugnant to their nature. From hence it appears how God may inter-

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“produce his effects in us all at once, but in such order, and by those degrees that suit with our capacities and qualifications. [u.] Lastly, His motions are not discernible by us from the natural operations of our minds. We feel them no otherwise than we do our thoughts and meditations, we cannot distinguish them, by the manner of their affecting us, from our natural reasonings, and the operations of truth upon our souls; so that if God had only designed to give the Holy Spirit to us, without making any mention of it in his word, we could never have known, unless it had been communicated to us by some private revelation, that our souls are moved by a divine power when we love God and keep his commandments. [w.]”

This is a confirmation of what our author has declared above, particularly that the Holy Spirit's operations cannot be called *miraculous*. A larger proof and illustration of the foregoing propositions may be seen in the same chapter. The consequence resulting from them, *viz.* that the Spirit does not operate *irresistibly*, is clearly proved and defended against *Turretin* in chap. 8, 9, &c.

See also *Scott's Christian Life*, part 2. chap. 4. par. 5. p. 237. “God (says that author) in the ordinary course of his government doth as well leave *free* agents to the natural *freedom* with which he first created them, as *necessary* ones to these necessities which he first *impressed* upon their natures. For his *providence* is *succedaneous* to his *creation*, and did at first *begin* where that *ended*; and doth still *proceed* as it *began*, *ordering* and *governing* all things according to the several *frames* and *models* in which he first *cast* and *created* them; nor can he order and govern them *otherwise* without *unraveling* his own *creation*, and making things to be otherwise than he first made them. For how can he ordinarily *necessitate* those agents whom he first made *free*, without *changing* their natures from *free* to *necessary*, and making them a *different* kind of being than he made them? So that though in the course of his government God doth powerfully *importune* and *persuade* us; yet he lays no *necessity* on our *wills*; but leaves us free to *choose* or *refuse*; and as the *temptations* of *sin* incline us *one* way, so the *grace* of God inclines us *another*, but both leave us to our *liberty* to go which way we please.”

See also *Burnet* on the 10th article of the Church of *Eng.* and *Tillotson's* 169th serm. p. 455. vol. 3. or 147th serm. p. 310. 3d. edit. fol. 198th, 199th serm. p. 644, &c. or *Rymer's* General Representation of Rev. Rel. c. 9. p. 210, 211.

If the foregoing observations be true, it follows that the ordinary operation of the Spirit cannot be any *physical influence*, or immediate determination of the will; it must therefore be

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only

[u.] *Ibid.* p. 124.[w.] *Ibid.* p. 125, 126.

interpose in matters relating to the will, and yet not violate the order of nature, nor injure his con-

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only a *moral* influence, or a mediate, rational determination. The manner of effecting this may be by injecting ideas, representing arguments, exhibiting motives, and assisting the understanding in its apprehension of them. This I think is all that *Wolaston* could mean by the words *suggestion, impulse, or silent communication of some spiritual being*: [x.] and seems to be the only intelligible notion of the influence of either good or evil spirits: in which sense I believe that we are very frequently acted upon, in order to promote the good of the whole, and compleat the designs of a particular providence. The author last mentioned has given us a fine description of the manner in which this government of free beings may be exercised and applied to the ends above-mentioned. "It is not possible" (says he) [y.] but many things suitable to several cases may be brought to pass by means of secret and sometimes sudden influences on our minds, or the minds of other men whose acts may affect us. For instance; if the case should require that *N.* should be delivered from any threatening ruin, or from some misfortune which would certainly befall him, if he should go such a way, at such a time as he intended; upon this occasion some new reasons may be presented to his mind why he should not go at all, or not then, or not by that road; or he may forget to go: or if he is to be delivered from some dangerous enemy, either some new turn given to his thoughts may divert him from going where the enemy will be, or the enemy may after the same manner be diverted from coming where he shall be, or his (the enemy's) resentment may be qualified, or some proper method may be suggested, or degree of resolution and vigour may be excited. After the same manner, not only deliverances from dangers and troubles, but advantages and successes may be conferred. Or on the other side, men may, by way of punishment for crimes committed, incur mischiefs and calamities. I say, these things and such like may be. For since the motions and actions of men, which depend upon their wills, do also depend upon their judgments, as these again do on the present appearances or non-appearances of things in their minds; if a new prospect of things can be any way produced, the light by which they are seen altered, new forces and directions impressed upon the spirits, passions exalted or abated, the power of judging enlivened or debilitated, or the attention taken off, without any suspension or alteration of the standing laws of nature; then without that, new volitions, designs, measures, or a cessation of thinking also may be produced, and thus many things prevented that would otherwise be, and many brought about that would not." See also *Sherlock on Providence*, pag. 51. 2d edit.

Again

[x.] *Rel. of Nat. delin.* p. 106.

[y.] Page 105.

constancy. Not that God actually determines the will by an immediate influx, for by this means the act of election would change its nature, and be imputed to God rather than to the will of the creature; but that in some manner he restores the faculty to its perfection, and makes it, when thus fitly disposed, exert its proper actions according to the rectitude of its nature, without any diminution of its liberty.

VII. Fifthly, It may be demonstrated that the *prayers* themselves have some natural power and efficacy with regard to the will: For prayers are certain endeavours towards the exercise of liberty, and contain in them acts of election, though perhaps imperfect ones; and such is

Prayers naturally tend to perfect the mind.

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Again, [x.] "That there may be possibly such inspirations of new thoughts and counsels may perhaps appear farther from this, that we so frequently find thoughts arising in our heads, into which we are led by no discourse, nothing we read, no clue of reasoning, but they surprise and come upon us from we know not what quarter. If they proceed from the mobility of spirits straggling out of order, and fortuitous affections of the brain, or were of the nature of *dreams*, why are they not as wild, incoherent, and extravagant as these are?" Is it not much more reasonable to imagine that they come by the order and direction of an all-seeing and all-gracious God who continually watches over us, and disposes every thing in and about us, for the good of ourselves or others? Not to speak of the agreeableness of this notion to the opinions and belief of the best and wisest men in all ages. The consequence which *Wollaston* draws from the whole is perfectly agreeable to the scope of our author. "If this be the case, as it seems to be, that men's minds are susceptible of such insinuations and impressions as frequently by ways unknown do affect them, and give them an inclination towards this or that; how many things may be brought to pass by these means, without fixing and refixing the laws of nature, any more than they are unfixed when one man alters the opinion of another, by throwing a book proper for that purpose in his way?"

To the same purpose see *Scott's* Christian Life, part 2. vol. 2. § 1. p. 81, 82. Or *Whitby*, Append. to 2 Cor. 6. Comp. Dr. *Balgi's* Divine Benevolence asserted. p. 95, &c.

I hope the reader will excuse me for insisting so long on this point, since false notions concerning it have produced the most pernicious consequences to religion in general, as well as the principal objections against our author's system.

[x.] Page 107.

the nature of all powers, that they acquire strength by trial and exercise, and every act, though imperfect, is a step to a more perfect one, till they have attained to a habit and facility of acting. The constant exercise of prayer may therefore tend, by a natural efficacy, to restore the proper use of free will, and regain its native vigour.

And to
subdue
the affec-
tions,

VIII. Sixthly, The same may be said concerning the government of the passions and affections, which constitutes so great a part of human felicity: we have shewn that the elective power is superior to all others, and has the government of them, and that when the mind is corrupted with vice, the will in a great measure falls from that power which nature gave it. Yet the inferior affections of the mind have not quite shaken off the yoke, they still obey, though with some difficulty, but use and exercise are necessary to implant an habit of obedience in them. Since therefore prayers contain in themselves an exercise of election, they have a natural efficacy to strengthen the elective acts, and by the same means accustom the affections to obey: for a repeated act augments the power and overcomes resistance, (72.)

IX,

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(72.) *Prayer* puts us upon making good resolutions, and endeavouring to subdue our vicious inclinations: it animates our zeal, and enflames our affections; it exercises and improves our faith, our hope, and charity; and therefore is in itself a means of strengthening our faculties, and removing all impediments to a due exertion of them. It also makes us sensible of our strict dependence on the Deity, of our manifold wants, and the great benefit of his supplies, and of consequence it naturally fits us for them, and inclines us to make a right use of them when we do receive them. Comp. *Barrow*, first vol. 1st edit. p. 493.

“ God’s end (says *Chubb*) in requiring this duty of prayer, “ is wholly and solely the good and benefit of his creatures, “ viz. that it may be a means to work in the petitioner a suitable frame and temper of mind, and to dispose him to a suitable “ able

IX. Seventhly, As to material objects, *viz.* our own bodies and the elements, it is plain that the intellectual world is more noble than the material, and consequently that this latter was made for the sake of the former, and is subservient to its use: But since the actions of beings endowed with understanding and will are free, and on that account contingent, they necessarily produce a contingency also in material substances which depend upon them. For we can excite certain motions in our own bodies, and communicate them to the adjacent ones, which motions are not in this case produced merely according to mechanic laws, but the direction of the will.

The actions of free beings will produce a contingency in material things, yet this does not offer any violence to nature.

Nor would they have happened at the time or in the manner they do, if the will had not by its own liberty excited them. Neither do we suppose that any violence or disorder happens hereby to the laws of nature; for nature itself has provided that the less should give way to the more noble, that is, local motion to the action of the will, being the more excellent of the two. We must believe the same concerning agents of a superior nature; and the more noble order they are of, the greater sphere of action is to be attributed to them. Such little creatures

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"able practice and conversation, and so render him a suitable and proper object of God's special care and love."

"And as this is God's end in appointing this duty, so for this end he requires the frequent returns of it, that the mind of the petitioner may be habitually seasoned with a sense of himself. [b.] See also Bishop Patrick's Discourse concerning Prayer, ch. 8. and 9. Comp. Ibbot's sermons, vol. 2. s. xxvi, xxvii. Or Dr. Balguy's Divine Benevolence asserted, p. 97."

These effects and uses of prayer, most of which are discoverable by natural reason, prove sufficiently that prayer is a *natural duty*. Concerning the *efficacy* of it, and the manner whereby providence may be supposed to answer our particular requests, see the following notes to this subsection.

[b.] Chubb's *Tracts*, p. 180, &c.

creatures as we men are can convey water in canals, drain such parts of the earth as are naturally covered with water, drain the dry-land, and produce a great many other changes both in the earth, the water and the air. Who then can affirm but that there may be other agents who could change almost the whole elements, if they were not prohibited by certain laws? All who acknowledge the existence of such beings, are agreed that these things are possible; now it must be allowed that whatever is performed by these beings, is done according to the laws of nature, and that no manner of violence is hereby offered to the order of it, any more than by the actions of our own will.

There is a system of intellectual as well as material beings, which act as much upon each other.

X. Eighthly, And as all material beings are connected together, and by mutual influence act upon each other; viz. the superior upon the inferior, the sun upon the æther and the moon, and that upon the air, water, and earth; and perhaps *vice versa*; so it is in like manner probable that there is a certain order and system of intellectual beings constituted, who are no less subordinate to one another, and operate upon each other by a mutual influence, according to the laws established by nature.

God makes use of the ministry of angels in the government of mankind, nor is this any violence to nature.

XI. Ninthly, There seems to be no reason why God should not make use of the ministry of those beings in the government of this world * whenever it may be expedient. This we see is done in some measure upon our earthly globe. For he makes use of men to govern other animals, and some men are set as guardians over others. And as the attendants of princes and judges perform their office, not as they themselves please, but according to the appointment of their masters, or the laws; so in like manner we are to believe that agents more

* See the Religion of Nature delineated, p. 108, 109.

more excellent than us (which we stile ministering angels) discharge their office according to the laws prescribed by God. Suppose therefore this, about assisting such as regularly apply to God, to be one of these laws; let them be commanded to relieve those who make their humble addresses to him, and let the manner of invoking him be prescribed by nature, or some positive law: Can it be doubted whether they would not as readily exert their powers for the assistance of these supplicants, and as diligently discharge the duty of relieving them from distress, as a judge's officer, or a prince's servant performs the commands of his master? And so long as these things are done according to the general order, and under such conditions as are agreeable to nature and reason, they can be no more deemed repugnant to the order of nature, or to the laws appointed for the government of the world, than civil government and the laws among men are. Here is nothing contrary to or inconsistent with the laws of universal nature: for it does not seem any more repugnant to these that angels should use their powers for the relief of such as pray to God, than that men should help each other according to their abilities. If it be granted that these things are so, it will be very apparent how our *prayers* may have their effect, and the desired changes may be produced in our bodies, and the elements, without doing violence to nature, or disturbing the order established by God. Nay it may be provided by a law, that our wishes be thus fulfilled: and we need not declare how much this power over external things granted to free agents, may tend to raise our affections and incline the wills themselves. 'Tis very well known how great an influence the temperature of the blood and motion of the spirits

Spirits have over these. Since then our bodies are by a law of nature capable of being moved by free agents, at least when we desire it, it is not impossible but that by the means of these bodies, they may have access to the soul; and though they cannot act upon the *will* immediately, yet they may indirectly excite it to exert its own acts. (73.)

God is not obliged to take away the abuse of free will, since he has established a method of assisting his worshippers.

XII. Tenthly, There's neither any occasion nor room to explain how agreeable this is to reason and the holy scriptures. Let it suffice to observe how large a field is hereby opened for prayer, and how effectual it may be for obtaining the assistance not only of God himself immediately, but also of his ministers.

It must be confessed that God sometimes relieves the distressed, and when applied to, interposes in matters relating to the will: but these things are effected according to the universal law of nature. And though this be superior to that which is implanted in the particular nature of some beings; yet it is no less natural with regard to the system of universal nature; neither are we to believe that this is often done, but only in cases where a particular nature cannot be left to itself without detriment to the whole. Nor is God, because he sometimes vouchsafes to interpose and help the supplicant, also obliged entirely to remove the abuse of free-will; that is, in reality, to destroy the nature itself. By a law of nature, the exercise of

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(73.) That is, as a man is excited or inclined to any thing by a prospect of the pleasure or pain which may attend the prosecution or omission of it; or, as we commonly say, by another's *working upon* his passions, his hopes, or his fears: for that superior beings act upon us in no other sense, that their influence consists only in occasioning pleasant or disagreeable ideas in us, in representing arguments, motives, &c. to us, may perhaps be gathered from note 71. And, I think, it must be allowed that this is very consistent with that physical indifference, or absolute freedom of the will above described.

of that faculty belongs to such agents as are endowed with it, and though that law admits of an exception, yet it cannot be quite abrogated, without greater damage done to the whole than what may happen from the abuse of it. Nor is God obliged, because prayers have their effect with him, to relieve such as don't pray to him at all.

XIII. Eleventhly, This seems to establish the efficacy of prayers much better than their opinion who hold that all is fixed by God in a fatal concatenation, and that such things as are requested of God, and seem to be obtained, are not in any respect owing to the prayers; but that God has by his foreknowledge joined the actions of the will with corporeal motions, in such a manner that they should happen together, but without any other relation to each other than what arises from his pre-ordination; as appears in the agreement between the index of a watch and the sun.

The efficacy of prayers cannot be accounted for if all things be left to necessary causes.

For instance: God has pre-ordained a storm from necessary causes, and that some notorious offenders shall be sailing in it: when they are in danger they shall repent and pray to God, and at length the wind shall cease.

Thus a calm ensues upon the prayers of the petitioners, but without any connection or dependence on each other, merely by the force of predisposed causes, which do not require any interposition of the divine power. (74.)

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(74.) The forementioned hypothesis of a pre-determined and necessary connection between corporeal motions and the operations of the will, is advanced by *Leibnitz* in what is commonly called his System of the *Pre-established Harmony*, which occurs in several of his works, an account of which may be seen in *Fabricius*. [b.] An explanation of it by *G. Henscius* may be found in the *Present State of the Republic of Letters*, vol. 4.

[b.] *Deleus Argument*. &c. p. 387, &c.

The assertors of this opinion are obliged from the common sense of mankind to allow that

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for *Obj.* 1729. There are some objections against it in *Bayle's* Dict. article *Roxarius*. Rem. L.---But as the whole of it is built upon a supposition that the mind has not a liberty of indifference, and of consequence no proper liberty at all, we need not spend any time in confuting it, having, I hope, sufficiently established the contrary principle above, and thereby removed the foundation of it.

Whiston in particular has espoused the opinion which our author alludes to, and enlarged upon it in the following manner, [c.] "Our imperfection is such, that we can only act *pro re nata*, can never know beforehand the behaviour or actions of men, neither can we foresee what circumstances and conjunctures will happen at any certain time hereafter. And so we cannot provide for future events, nor pre-dispose things in such a manner that every one shall be dealt with, or every thing done, no otherwise than if we were alive and present, we should think proper and reasonable, and should actually do. But in the divine operation it is quite otherwise. God's prescience enables him to act after a more sublime manner, and by a constant course of nature and chain of mechanical causes to do every thing so as it shall not be distinguishable from a particular interposition of his power, nor be otherwise than on such a particular interposition would have been brought to pass. He who has created all things, and given them their several powers and faculties, foresees the effects of them all; at once looks through the entire chain of causes, actions and events, and sees at what periods, and in what manner 'twill be necessary and expedient to bring about any changes, bestow any mercies, or inflict any punishments on the world. Which being unquestionably true, 'tis evident he can as well provide and pre-dispose natural causes for those mutations, mercies or judgments: he can as easily put the machine into such motions as shall, without a necessity of his mending or correcting it, correspond to all these foreseen events or actions, as make way for such alterations afterwards, by giving a random force to the whole: and when these two ways are equally possible, I need not say which is most agreeable to the divine perfections, and most worthy of God." And again: [d.] "We pray to God for fruitful seasons, for health, for peace, for the success of our endeavours, for a blessing on our food and physick, and deprecate the contrary miseries from us. Yet at the same time we see the seasons depend on the settled course of the sun, or other natural and necessary causes: we find our health or sickness to be the proper effects of our diet and regimen: we observe peace and war subject to the intrigues of princes, and the plain results of visible

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[c.] *New Theory*, B. 4. C. 4. Solution 87. [d.] *Ibid.* *Coralary*, p. 362. 1st Edit.

that God is to be invoked and that such as duly offer up their prayers have their requests granted; but as they are of opinion that things go by fate, and that there is no room for *contingency*, or a *particular providence*, they have invented this scheme that there might be, or at least might seem to be, some room for prayers. But all this is to no purpose: For since God has made agents free, and allowed them the use of liberty, he must also have reserved to himself a liberty of treating them according to what their nature requires, which cannot be done without a peculiar providence, and immediate interposition; without these no efficacy will be left to prayer, no worship to God, no honour to religion: For if the production of those things which we request depend upon antecedent, natural, and necessary causes, our desires will be answered no less upon the omission, than the offering up of prayers. Vows and prayers therefore are made in vain. If it be said that the supplicants could not omit them, since they were pre-ordained. I answer: He

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“ conjunctures in human affairs: we know that worldly prudence and cunning has a main stroke in the success of men’s labours: we feel the advantageous effects of some food and physic, and have reason to believe that the same does very much result from the goodness of the drugs, the fitness of the proportion, and the skill of the physician; and can frequently give a plain and mechanical reason of the different operation of all these things; neither do we hope for the exercise of a *miraculous* power in these or the like cases. In short, second causes, says he, will work according to their natures, let men’s supplications be never so importunate: and to expect a miracle in answer to every petition, is more than the most religious dare pretend to.” See also *Wollaston’s* Illustration of this Hypothesis, p. 104. or *Fidler’s* Body of Div. 1st vol. p. 154.

We shall propose an answer to it in the following note. Let it suffice at present to observe, that this particular interposition of Divine Power, which our author contends for, is very improperly stiled *miraculous*, as may be seen from note 71, and the 6th paragraph of this subsection.

He that could omit them could not possibly offer them: his omission therefore is not culpable: And he that is employed in prayer to God undertakes a superfluous office: for these petitions in reality contribute nothing to the effect, and no reason can be given why that should be required which is of no benefit. (75.)

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(75.) Though this answer is very solid, and may by some perhaps be thought sufficient; yet, as the point before us is of the greatest importance; since wrong notions concerning it cause perplexities which disturb the minds of most men, as *Whiston* observes, [e.] and since the scheme of providence so elaborately displayed by that author will not, I fear, help to clear them, as he promises, but rather occasion worse;—on these accounts it will not be improper to give a fuller confutation of it from such authors as endeavour to prove that the forementioned scheme of providence is both impossible in itself, and attended with consequences destructive of the very notion of prayer, and most other duties of religion. “The abettors of the mechanical hypothesis, [f.] says *Jenkin*, argue that he is the best artist “who can contrive an engine that shall need the least meddling “with after it is made. But it ought to be considered what “the nature of the engine is, and what the ends and uses of it “are; and if the nature of it be such that it cannot answer the “ends for which it was framed, without sometimes an assisting “hand, it would be no point of wisdom in the artificer, for the “credit of his contrivance, to lose the most useful ends designed “by it. And if, among other uses, this curious engine were “designed to reward the good, punish bad men; to remove “the punishment upon amendment, and to renew it upon a “relapse: since brute matter is incapable of varying its motion, and suiting itself to the several states and changes of “free agents, he must assist it, unless he will lose the chief “end for which it is to serve. It is no defect in the skill and “wisdom of the Almighty, that matter and motion have not “free-will as men have; but it would be a great defect in his “wisdom not to make them the instruments of rewards and “punishments, because it is impossible for them of themselves “to apply and suit themselves to the several states and conditions of free agents. The nature of matter and motion is “such, that they cannot serve all the designs of their creator, “without his interposition, and therefore he constantly doth “interpose according to a certain tenor which he hath prescribed to himself.”

He proceeds to a particular examination of the *Pre-established Order* in p. 221. which he opposes with much the same arguments as these that follow from *Fiddes*. [g.] “As to the opinion

[e.] *New Theory*, p. 362. [f.] *Reason. of Christ*. 2d Vol. p. 218. 5th edit. [g.] *Theol. Spec.* b. 3. part 2. c. 4. p. 292.

XIV. 'Tis scarce possible for one who reads this not to think of that famous difficulty, *viz.* how

An intimation that this is not repugnant to the Divine Prescience.

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" nion of those who say, God upon the foresight of the prayers
 " of men to him, disposeth the order of things in such a
 " manner, that what they pray for shall happen, or what they
 " deprecate be averted; this is altogether inconceivable; or
 " rather, in the nature of things, supposing men free agents,
 " impossible. For though God does foresee which way man
 " will act, yet nothing upon the mechanical hypothesis can
 " follow from his action, but according to the laws of me-
 " chanism. In case any one, for instance, should pray to be
 " delivered from the danger of some infectious or pestilential
 " distemper, the vapour whereby it is propagated, will, not-
 " withstanding, pursue its natural course, and produce its
 " effect wherever it falls upon a proper subject: it can make
 " no manner of distinction between him that *sacrificeth* and
 " him that *sacrificeth not*. God may indeed, by some secret
 " impulse on the mind of man, which yet he is at liberty to
 " follow, be the occasion of diverting him from the scope of
 " its motion; or, perhaps, on some extraordinary exigence, by
 " an invisible power, retard, accelerate, or obstruct its course;
 " but still, if all things operate mechanically, whether man
 " pray or no, it will unavoidably have its proper effect. There
 " is another case wherein the motives to prayer, if all things
 " come to pass by the fixed laws of mechanism, appear still
 " more evidently groundless. A man in the heat of battle,
 " prays that God would preserve him from the instruments of
 " death, which fly every where about him; yet a ball from a
 " canon or a musquet will necessarily pursue the line of its
 " direction; it depends however on the choice of man, whether
 " he will give it such a particular direction as by the natural
 " tendency of it will take away the life of the person who de-
 " precates the danger wherewith he finds himself surrounded.
 " In this case it is impossible, upon any foresight of his prayers,
 " that the order of causes, which are in themselves of arbitrary
 " and uncertain determination, shall be disposed after such a
 " manner as certainly to produce the desired effect of them."
 Concerning the impossibility of adapting a fixed and immutable
 law to the state and condition of free or mutable agents, see
 B. 2. part 1. p. 154.

Lastly: " It is of great use to us (says *Sherlock*) [b.] to un-
 " derstand this which teaches us what we may expect from
 " God, and what we must attribute to him in the government
 " of nature. We must not expect in ordinary cases that God
 " should reverse the laws of nature for us; that if we leap into
 " the fire it shall not burn us; or into the water it shall not
 " drown us: and by the same reason, the providence of God
 " is not concerned to preserve us when we destroy ourselves by
 " intemperance and lust: for God does not work miracles to
 " deliver men from the evil effects of their own wickedness:

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[b.] *On Providence*, p. 83. 1st Edit.

how the contingency of things can be consistent with the divine *prescience*: Neither is it proper to meddle with it in this place: For it would require a whole book. Let it suffice to give a hint, that the solution of it depends upon considering the *manner* by which we apprehend the things of God. (76.) He that understands that

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“ but all the kind influences of heaven which supply our wants, and fill our hearts with food and gladness, are owing to that good providence which commands nature to yield her increase; and those disorders of nature which afflict the world with famines, pestilence and earthquakes, are the effects of God’s anger and displeasure, and are ordered by him for the punishment of a wicked world. We must all believe this, or confess that we mock God, when we bless him for a healthful air and fruitful seasons, or deprecate his anger when we see visible tokens of his vengeance in the disorders of nature. For did not God immediately interpose in the government of nature, there would be no reason to beg his favour, or deprecate his anger upon these accounts.”—And to the same purpose he urges, p. 71. That without this belief, that God takes a particular care of all his creatures in the government of all events that can happen to them (which belief appears to be impossible upon the *mechanical hypothesis*) there is no reason nor pretence for most of the particular duties of religious worship, as is fully proved in the same place. See also C. 9. and Ibbot’s Sermons, vol. ii. p. 211.

(76.) He means the scheme of *analogy*, concerning which see n. 10. rem. k. We have given our notion of the word *Prescience*, *ib.* R. e. see also Jackson on *Human Liberty*, page 62. But though we cannot perhaps determine the precise manner of God’s knowing the free acts of men, yet we are certain that he does and must always know them: since otherwise he would know many things now which he once did not know, and consequently his *omniscience* or infinite knowledge would receive addition from events, (which as we have made appear in R. l.) is contrary to the true notion of infinity. This general argument drawn from God’s infinite or *perfect* knowledge, seems to me the only one which can amount to a proof that he must always have a complete and equal knowledge of such actions as are in themselves absolutely contingent, as all those evidently are which depend upon the free-will of the creature. These actions (as we formerly observed) may properly be called *future* with respect to us or other men, and the knowledge of them in the same respect be styled *fore-knowledge*. But with regard to the Deity, whose existence and attributes can have no relation to time, *i. e.* to which nothing can be at a distance; I think, the expression is absurd; and we must necessarily either admit the fore-mentioned absurdity of supposing his knowledge limited,

or

that manner rightly will never stick at this difficulty.

The reader may observe, that in this and other places, I interperse some things which belong to *revealed religion*, contrary to what I intended at first; which happened because some objections seemed to arise from revealed religion, in opposition to the principles and arguments here laid down. Since therefore I had determined to produce nothing but what was perfectly agreeable to the articles of faith, and the principles of the Christian religion, I found it necessary to call in the scripture to my assistance, that the answer might come from the same quarter with the objections.

One that knows nothing of revealed religion cannot bring these objections; one that does not believe it has no right to urge them. For if he be sensible that the objections are of any force, he must of necessity also admit the solutions, since both of them depend upon the same authority. (77.)

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or else allow that all things are at all times equally in his view; and consequently that knowledge, as in him, hath nothing to do with *fore* or *after*.

If we admit this notion of things being always present to God, though successive to us, which seems to be the only way of conceiving how contingencies can possibly be objects of any knowledge; if this, I say, be allowed, then all things, actions, &c. which can properly be said to exist, will be equally proper *objects* of God's knowledge, since he is hereby supposed not to know them *in fieri*, or in *their cause*; but *in esse*, or in their *actual existence*. Which at the same time gives us the *medium* of their being knowable, *viz.* Their real existence; and makes it as easy for us to imagine how God should always know them, as how we should ever know a thing when it is immediately presented to us.

(77.) This general argument lies against all those who bring objections from the scripture account of the *creation, fall, &c.* *viz.* either they believe the truth and divine authority of those books, or they do not; if they do, then they must believe them also when they declare that all the works of God are holy and just and good; and consequently that the fore-mentioned difficulties

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Why God does not translate man to some other place, where nothing would occur that could tempt him to choose amiss.

This is the same as if it were ask'd why God did not give the earth to be inhabited by the brutes only.

I. 'TIS plain, that in the present state of things it is impossible for man to live without natural evils, or the danger of erring. 'Tis a common question, why does not God change this state, and translate man to some other, where all occasions of error and excitements to evil being cut off, he might choose only good; i. e. in reality, Why he has placed man upon the earth? Why did he not leave it to be inhabited by the brutes alone? There are some perhaps who expect such things as these from the divine goodness, but without any sense or reason; since it manifestly appears to be better that we should contend with the present evils, than that the earth should be void of all rational inhabitants. (78.)

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culties are no real arguments against the divine attributes; if they do not, then the whole falls to the ground. For to admit one part of an account and reject the other, when both depend upon the same authority, is evidently unreasonable.

Objections therefore drawn from the scripture account of these matters can but be mere arguments *ad hominem* at best: and are of no force either to make or justify an unbeliever.

(78.) To ask why man was placed in such a world as this, is to ask why he was created at all? Since if he was to be made what he is, i. e. consisting of a soul and a body, this world was a proper place for him. To the question, Why should he be made of such a nature as denominates him *man*, or placed in this lower class of beings? a sufficient answer is given in note 24, where, I think, it is rendered probable, that the same goodness which excited the Deity to create beings of the highest order, would induce him both to create as many of that order as could commodiously exist together, or be consistent with the good of the whole; and likewise to produce a series of as many inferior orders, and as many particular beings in each of these orders,

Some make it a question, why so great a part of the earth is given away to the brutes; but these men would have it all left to them, and mankind itself extinct.

II. We have often declared that evils are chiefly to be avoided, nay that they are prohibited by God, because they are prejudicial to human nature; but how much worse would it be to take that nature entirely away? They therefore who require this of the divine goodness, desire the greatest evil of all as a remedy for evils. The same persons also, that with such earnestness desire a change of their condition are afraid of death, forgetting

This is totally extirpating mankind.

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ders, as could be conceived to exist between himself and nothing; or so long as existence in the very lowest order might be a benefit either to the beings of that order, or to those of some other. The consequence of which is, that we must either have been placed in the class we are in at present, or no where; since by the supposition every other class is full. And there will appear sufficient reason for our being created in this order, and placed where we are, rather than not created at all, provided that existence be a blessing to us, or that we receive in general more happiness than misery in this present state: which point will be considered in the next *subsection*.

That these several classes may be supposed to advance gradually towards perfection, and of consequence that we in time may be removed into some better state, see note 19 and W.

These considerations will supply us with an answer to *Bayle's* objection against what our author advances in this paragraph. "This (says he) is just like as if a king should confine several of his subjects in his dungeons, till they were 60 years old, because these dungeons would otherwise be empty." But to make any *likeness* at all in these two cases, it must be made appear in the first place, that we really meet with more evil of all kinds than good in this world; and consequently, that it were better for us to be out of it than in it: contrary to what our author has proved in Ch. 1. par. 7. Ch. 4. § 8. par. 7. and in the following subsection: and secondly, it must be shewn also, that we might have been placed in some better world, without any inconvenience to the *rest of the universe*, contrary to what may be concluded from the former part of this note, and that other to which it refers.

that this change of their condition is what they dread the most of all in death.

III. Mankind believes indeed from the light of nature, that God will translate good men into a better state, but it is necessary that they should be prepared here, as plants in a nursery, before they be removed into the garden where they are to bear fruit. (79.) God has therefore decreed

God in due time will translate good men to a better state: but the present is as necessary as seed-time is to harvest.

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(79.) *Bayle* objects, that our author's comparison here is not a just one, since God cannot be tied to the use of common means, and a slow progress of second causes. He is not obliged to nurse us up as a gardener does his plants, but might as well have produced us adult and ripe in perfection, and have made us happy at once.—But perhaps it may appear a little doubtful to a person who attentively considers note 19, whether this could be done even in *natural* pleasure. However, I think, 'tis absolutely inconceivable how it should be effected in *moral* happiness. If we consider the nature of virtue and of man, it will not be possible for us to imagine how this could be implanted in him at first, or infused into him afterwards, or he be in any wise made morally perfect or good on a sudden. The idea of virtue consists in a repetition of free acts, and therefore it cannot be received *passively*: and though the disposition might be thus communicated, yet to compleat its nature and make it actually productive of true moral happiness, there must necessarily be required due time for exercise, experience and confirmed habits, as may be gathered from the *preliminary dissertation*; and will farther appear from notes 81 and 82.

From the nature of man also, or a being in his imperfect state, we may fairly infer that he could not have so great an idea of the moral perfections of the Deity, nor so clear an apprehension of the contrary qualities, nor consequently, a suitable affection for the one, and an abhorrence of the other, if he had not some actual experience of both. [i.]

We know not the real value of a good thing, we cannot be duly sensible of its excellence, except we have been in some measure acquainted with its opposite, or at least have perceived the want of it on some occasion. “Does any one (says *Leibnitz*) [k.] sufficiently relish the happiness of good health who has never been sick? Is it not most times necessary that a little evil should render a good more sensible, and consequently “greater?” See also note 19. The same holds stronger still in moral good: which is a confirmation of the *Alternative* that *Lactantius* speaks of; [l.] and which is well described by *A. Gellius*.

[i.] See Note 66.

[k.] *Memoirs of Literature*, v. 3. Art. 25. pag. 118.

[l.] *De Ira Dei*, § 13. sect. sub. fin. & 15.

decreed this life to be as it were the passage to a better. Thus this earth is replenished with inhabitants, who being educated under discipline for a while, till they have finished their course, shall depart into another state suited to their deserts. They who find fault with this in God, seem to me to

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Gellius. [m.] It does not therefore seem possible for us to have a due knowledge of virtue if we had never seen vice. Without this knowledge of virtue, we could not ardently desire it, without such a desire, and a sedulous prosecution of that desire, we could not attain to the proper exercise of it, and without this attainment we could not have any consciousness of desert, any comfortable self-approbation, or true moral happiness.

It appears then that virtue is an act of our own, that a series of these acts is requisite to constitute an habit of virtue, and of consequence that this cannot be *inspired* into any being, or however not produced in one of our weak frame, *on a sudden*: and in the last place, that this present state is necessary (as our author says) to train us up, and fit us for a better. That this life is properly a state of *discipline* and *probation*, and the virtues of it absolutely necessary to the happiness of the next, see *Rymer's General Representation of Rev. Rel.* part 2. ch. 3. pag. 385, &c. and *Scott's Christian Life*, vol. 2. ch. 4. § 3. p. 321, 335, &c. 8vo. and *Sherlock on Death*, c. 1. § 3. p. 77, &c. 4th edit. or *Rel. of Nat. Delin.* p. 213, 214.

To the same purpose is that excellent paper in the *Spectator*: No. 447.—“The last use I shall make of this remarkable property in human nature, of being delighted with those actions to which it is accustomed, is to shew how absolutely necessary it is for us to gain habits of virtue in this life, if we would enjoy the pleasures of the next. The state of bliss we call heaven will not be capable of affecting those minds which are not thus qualified for it; we must in this world gain a relish of truth and virtue, if we would be able to taste that knowledge and perfection which are to make us happy in the next. The seeds of those spiritual joys and raptures, which are to rise up and flourish in the soul to all eternity, must be planted in her during this her present state of probation. In short, heaven is not to be looked upon only as the reward, but as the natural effect of a religious life.” See also *Tilloson's Sermon*. 1st vol. fol. p. 51, 82, 85, &c. and the 78th sermon. 2d vol. p. 591. Concerning the true end of man, and the means of obtaining it, and the nature both of those virtues which will constitute the greatest part of heaven, and of those *instrumental duties* by which we are to acquire, improve, and perfect these heavenly virtues, or make our own heaven; see *Scott's Christian Life*, vol. 1. particularly ch. 3. which notion is also well defended by *Rymer* in the chap. above-mentioned. See also *Laughton's sermon*. on *Rom.* vi. 23.

[m.] B. 6. Ch. 1,

do the same as if one who knows nothing of harvest or the nature of agriculture, should laugh at the sower for throwing away his corn. For there is no doubt but the present state of things is as necessary, not only to the earth lest it should be void of inhabitants, and to the animals, which for the most part depend upon the labours of men, but also to men themselves; and as requisite in the divine administration, in order to some better life, as seed-time is to harvest. (*W.*)

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(*W.*) But it is asked, since man is capable of a better state, why did not God place him in it immediately? Can it be agreeable to an infinitely good being to delay so great a benefit, and make his creatures wait for it with a long train of sufferings, when he might have placed them in that happy condition at first? Is it not a rule that he who gives frankly gives twice, and that benefits lose their grace when dispensed with a slow hand?

To this I reply, that we should not be surprized if we were able to give no reason for God's conduct in this particular. For since it's impossible that we should have a perfect view of the contrivance and whole fabric of the universe, 'tis likewise impossible that we should be able to discover the reason of every thing in it. But if in those parts that we are acquainted with, we discern apparent footsteps of wisdom and goodness, we ought to conclude that the same go through all the rest, though we can't trace them.

But adly, Though this answer be true and sufficient, it happens that we have no occasion for it at present. For we believe that we are able to give a very good account why God did not place mankind in the same certainty and degree of happiness that we expect in heaven. In order to this let us consider,

1st. That the world, so far as known to us, is one intire machine, in which all the parts have a mutual respect, and dependence on one another, and contribute to the support and preservation of the whole. This is a proof of the unity and wisdom of the Maker.

2dly. That in such a vast machine it was impossible all the parts should be of the same sort or have the same offices, and of consequence there must be in the several parts of the system different bodies of different qualities and constitutions.

3dly. That every one of these were capable of subsisting and supporting animals; but then it was impossible that all these animals should be of the same kind, or have the same qualifications or conveniences.

4thly. The case being thus, all that could be expected from the framer of the whole was, that he should fill each of these parts of the universe with proper animals, which might enjoy them-

SUBSECT. VI.

Concerning the Scarcity of Happy Persons, and the General Corruption of Mankind.

I. **B**UT it may seem strange, that of so great a multitude of men, so few should attain to happiness. For whether that be supposed to arise from the fruition of such things

Some objections proposed concerning the rarity of as happy persons.

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themselves, and live as conveniently as the circumstances of the place allowed: and where the circumstances of the station would not afford conveniencies greater than the inconveniencies that attended it, that place should be left void, since that was better than to fill it with miserable creatures. By miserable I understand, as the author does, creatures whose being, taken in the whole duration of it, has more evil than good.

5thly. If we conceive some of these creatures of such a nature that they may either forfeit the place in which they are, or grow unfit for it by the imperfections that attend their bodies or circumstances; a case which we see often happen to men in this life; then it will be agreeable to the wisdom and goodness of the common author to contrive the matter so, that those in a worse station should grow up to a capacity of fitting and filling those habitations, which the others deserted, or became incapable of possessing any longer. We see such transmutations and translations happen among the lower animals.

Thus insects being generated and prepared in water, at a proper time desert their womb of water, get wings and mount into the air, which then affords them a more convenient habitation.

6thly. The same may be said of men. They were created at first on the earth, because there was no other place for them, all others had their proper inhabitants, and were full; and therefore man must either be here or no where. Now this earth is part of the universe, and of such a nature that it was impossible the animals in it should be freed from all inconveniencies, that is, exempted from all natural evils: but our good and wise God so contrived it by his peculiar care and favour that man, the only intelligent being in it, should be exempted from the greatest of these evils, that is, absolute extinction by death, and be capable of translation to a better place when it should become void, and accordingly the fall of angels might make room for men. This is so easy a thought, that I find many are of opinion that man was created with design to fill the place from whence the angels fell.

7thly.

as are agreeable to the natural appetites, or from free elections, it is manifest, that not even one

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7thly. If we conceive that the creatures thus advanced have more pleasure in their advancement than those that desert or change their station lose by their fall, it seems agreeable to the wisdom and goodness of God to permit such an exchange; for by that means his favours are more equally distributed to his creatures, and there is more good in the whole world than would be if this were not permitted. If all creatures were equal, and in stations equally capable of happiness, there were no room for such an exchange. But since such an equality is impossible, the next good to it is to let each intelligent creature have its turn in the best station, or at least a possibility afforded him of having it.

8thly. This seems to be the intent of what the scripture declares concerning a certain number of *elect*, which must be completed before the end and consummation of the world. A better reason could scarce be given why a certain number was to be filled up before the last day, than that this earth was designed to prepare as many inhabitants to be translated into heaven as were wanting; nor how any should be wanting but by the fall or departure of some of the inhabitants placed there by God at first. But it was reasonable that this should be proposed to mortals by way of reward, and that as many as God vouchsafed this favour to should be at liberty, by a trial of their virtues, to shew themselves worthy to succeed the fallen angels. This seems to offer a reason why God permitted men the use of free-will, *viz.* to shew himself just and equitable to his creatures; so that those of a lower class cannot complain of God since he has put it in their power to better their condition, if they will use their faculties aright: nor those in a higher state be too proud of the divine favour, and despise their inferiors; since if they abuse that favour, they shall be obliged to quit it to such of these inferiors as shall better deserve that station. Nor could there possibly be a more equal distribution of things; supposing it was necessary that there should be an inequality among beings, and different degrees of happiness among rational agents.

It thinks if these things be duly considered, they give a very good account why God did not at first create man in as good a station as he is capable of filling. Why he made a trial of him, and allowed him the use of free-will. Why he trained him up in labour and a painful exercise of virtue, in order to make him a fit inhabitant of heaven. He did not confine man to the earth as a prison. But as a prudent gardener prepares his plants in a nursery, to be removed into the field or garden, as soon as the trees which grow there have been converted to their proper use: in like manner does the most wise framer of the world prepare men here for a removal into heaven, as soon as a place shall be ready to receive them. Or like an indulgent

one of a hundred thousand is truly happy. In vain then do we enquire about the means which lead

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indulgent father who educates his children at school, and does not admit them to the management of his domestic affairs, or public business, till room be made for them by the removal of such as occupy these posts. Hence appears the reason why men are born weak, ignorant, and unfit for business, *viz.* to keep a proportion between their present state, and the offices they are designed for.

'T would be to no purpose for them to be born in a condition fit for public, domestic or manly functions; when at the same time there was no room for them to exert themselves, these being all taken up by others. 'Tis reasonable therefore that they should wait for their own turn, which will come soon enough when the present possessors are gone off the stage. Nor in the mean time are they in a state of misery, and as it were shut up in a dungeon, but in a condition sufficiently happy and eligible, and a better than which could not be given without ejecting those which enjoy it at present.

Farther, If we conceive certain creatures that by their constitution are naturally subject to dissolution, as 'tis demonstrable that all things consisting of matter are; and that the raising up new ones in the place of such as decay, yields a greater pleasure to those that thus grow up, than such as are already come to maturity could enjoy in the continuance of their being; then will it be agreeable to the goodness and wisdom of God to permit those that are thus grown up to decay, according to the tendency of their nature, and to substitute others in their room, rather than prevent their dissolution by a miracle. Which sufficiently justifies the goodness and wisdom of God, in permitting that succession of generations which we see in the world. God does not therefore deny or delay his favours through any want of kindness and beneficence, but because they could not be bestowed sooner without detriment to others. He might indeed have not created men, before the best place they were capable of was ready for them. But in the interim he had deprived them of the benefit which they now enjoy, and there would have been no room for merit or demerit, for divine justice or mercy. Is it not more reasonable, more worthy of God, to reward them with the kingdom of heaven for their obedience, and the proof of their virtues exhibited in an inferior state, than out of mere good pleasure to bestow so great a favour on them, who had done nothing at all to deserve it, had given no specimen of their disposition toward it?

The first you'll say argues greater munificence. But it is the part of prudence to moderate liberality; and since all could not partake of it equally (as in this case 'tis plain they could not) to prefer the most deserving.—But it is urged, why did God create more than could be provided for in the very best way? I answer, because he was not so sparing of his favours as to deny existence to any thing to which it would be a benefit, and

lead to happiness; the power of election is bestowed on man to no purpose, since it so rarely attains the end for which it was imparted.

That the power of election is not regarded.

II. Secondly, The far greater part of mankind neglecting this power of pleasing themselves in elections, or rather, to confess the truth, not in the least observing that they have it, or that happiness is to be expected from the use of it; give themselves up entirely to the government of their natural appetites and senses, and are plainly hurried on according to the impetus and direction of the *animal nature* as much as brutes. If therefore we have this power in us, it seems to be given us in vain, *i. e.* to such as neither use it, nor are conscious that they have it.

That there is an universal corruption.

III. Thirdly, Hence all mankind lie polluted and immersed in vice and wickedness; and it is not one or two, but every one, that deviates from the right use of election. How can these things be reconciled with the care and providence of an infinite good and powerful God?

These are best answered by revealed religion.

IV. I confess, that this corruption of manners, and almost universal deviation from the way to happiness, is better solved from revealed than natural religion, and that the necessity of a *revelation* is from hence rightly proved. For since the true cause which gave rise to this is a matter of fact, *viz.* the fall of the first man, it cannot be discovered merely by the

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and which might enjoy more good than evil in it. 'Tis plain that different orders make for the good of the whole. The superior ones have faculties to exercise upon those in a lower state, by the exercise whereof they may increase their own happiness, and assist others. As for the inferiors, can any thing contribute more to their security and satisfaction, than to find themselves committed to the care of such powerful and beneficent guardians, and enjoying their constant help and protection? Thus the whole work of God is admirably connected together, and all the parts subservient to each other, and demonstrate both the wisdom and the goodness of their author.

the strength of reason; but we stand in need of *historical* tradition to transmit this, as well as other matters of fact, down to us. But though there had been none such, and we were ignorant of the fall of the first man, yet we should have been furnished with a proper, though not so clear an answer, since the misery or corruption of mankind though really lamentable, yet is not so great but that it may be reconciled with the good providence of God.

V. For as to the first objection taken from the fewness of them that attain to happiness, we may reply that happiness is two-fold, *perfect* and *absolute*, or *moderate* and *partial*. I call that perfect which answers in every respect to our wishes, and that moderate which, though it does not equal our desires, yet is not quite destitute of agreeable enjoyments, with which life being accompanied, and sweetened as it were by the mitigation of its evils and the alleviation of its cares, becomes a blessing, and worth a prudent man's choice. As to the former, it is certain that it cannot fall to the lot of any man in this present state, nor is it a debt due from God to a creature, though never so innocent. Since the condition of men is, and must necessarily be such (while we inhabit this earth in its present state) as will by no means admit of this absolutely perfect happiness. For pains, griefs, and the rest of those which we call natural evils, cannot, as things now stand, be totally avoided, but by the preternatural favour of the Deity. The earth then must either be left destitute of inhabitants, or we must take up with a moderate share of happiness; this also is a gift worthy of God, and fit to be accepted and embraced by man. Neither is this a rare felicity, and which happens to few men; for all may enjoy it, and most actually do; especially

Many attain to a moderate happiness.

cially if they will make a prudent use of their elections. For if there be any bitter thing in life, it generally flows from depraved elections, and by a right use of these, any thing which creates uneasiness, or can make us weary of life, might be mitigated or removed. To conclude, though we complain of the miseries of life, yet we are unwilling to part with it, which is a certain indication that it is not a burden to us, and that not so few attain this moderate happiness, as the objection would insinuate. (X.)

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(X.) 'Tis objected that the proof brought here to shew that there is more good than evil in the world can't be solid, because it is founded on one of the greatest and most evident infirmities of our nature. For both divines and philosophers have condemned this fond desire of life as the greatest imperfection attending mortality, and have judged no evil to be greater than the fear of death.

I confess indeed, that an immoderate desire of life, as also dread of death, becomes sinful, when to preserve one or avoid the other, we are hurried into the violation of the laws of God, but in itself 'tis neither evil nor an imperfection; nay, 'tis good and part of the duty we owe to God the Giver of Life, and to ourselves. To be mortal is indeed an imperfection, but to fear death and endeavour to avoid it by all lawful means is no new infirmity of nature, but a necessary means of preserving the good gift of God so long as he thinks proper to indulge it. 'Tis also to be observed, that this fear of perishing is founded in the sense or opinion of the pleasure and satisfaction which we have in life, and these must bear a proportion to each other. Increase the opinion of the goodness of life, and the fear of dissolution increases likewise: for that a man should have a great sense of the pleasure and satisfaction he has in a thing, and not be afraid of losing it when he apprehends it in danger, is absurd and impossible. The fear of death then is not an imperfection, but rather a preservative of life, and a necessary consequence of that great love and value which we have for it.

But 2dly, 'Tis urged that it cannot be the sense of the good we find in life that makes us desirous of it, and afraid of death, since christians that are persuaded of another life, and firmly believe it to be infinitely preferable to the present, are yet equally desirous of living, and afraid to die, with those that have no such hope. But they were worse than pagans, if the reason of that fear was because they thought there was more good in this world than in heaven: and therefore it is no good argument, to prove that there is more good than evil in the world,

VI. As to the second thing objected, *viz.* Men make use of this elective
that most of us are either ignorant or regardless of power though they do not observe it.

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world, because every creature is fond of its being, and desires to preserve it.

To all which I answer, that from hence it is manifest, that the sense of all animate creatures, and the opinion of mankind both bad and good, is with the author, and I shall always sooner suspect the subtilty of a philosopher, disputing against common sense and experience, than the truth of those.

But 2dly, Whereas it is pretended that the best christians are afraid to die, which proves that it is not the opinion of goodness in the present life which makes men fond of it :

I answer, That the nature of things is and ought to be such, that they operate more or less according to their distance. Thus the sun at the distance of so many miles seems only a foot broad ; and every thing in like manner, by its remoteness, lessens both its apparent magnitude and efficacy. Now since the pleasures of heaven are at a great distance from us, and can only be apprehended by faith and hope ; 'tis no wonder that they are overbalanced by the pleasures of this life, which are present and immediately affect our senses.

If any ask why God made us so that things at a distance are less affecting. I answer, if causes did operate equally at all distances it would confound the order of the world, and bring infinite inconveniencies on the creatures. If the sun were as hot at the present distance as it would be if we touched it, neither plants, animals, nor the earth itself could subsist a moment, but all must vanish into smoke. In the same manner if things past or to come did equally affect our minds, and disturb the passions, appetites, &c. we could not pass one day with ease and satisfaction. God therefore has well and wisely provided that we should not lose the present good either through dread of futurity, or memory of what is past ; but that the benefits of this mortal life, though small in comparison, should often affect us more than much greater ones to come. The good of the whole system required that we should stay our appointed time in this world, was it not therefore graciously ordained that this world should appear very good and desirable to us ?

But 2dly, Though good christians believe that heaven is much better than this present state, yet the best are conscious to themselves that they are sinners, and have often offended a just God, and consequently have some doubt and terror on them when they are summoned to appear before his tribunal.

Farther, we are so framed as not to attempt great, difficult and unexperienced matters, without some emotion and unusual astonishment of mind ; which was necessary to prevent us from undertaking such things rashly and carelessly as might greatly prejudice ourselves or others, ere we could foresee the consequences. Now the passage from this life to another is entirely new, untried, unknown : 'tis no wonder therefore that the very strangeness of the thing, and greatness of the change, gives men

of this power of pleasing ourselves by election; upon a thorough enquiry it will be manifest, that

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men a shock, and makes them rather choose to stay where they are, especially since they find themselves well pleased with their present life. Neither is this without a providence. For if the passage to another world could be entered on without any such passion or emotion, and every thing that attended it were as clear and evident to us as the circumstances of this present life, all delay would be an insupportable torment to good men; nor could they wait their due time without the greatest pain, impatience and uneasiness. How much better has the good Author of Nature disposed things, by providing that mortals should be content and happy in this present life, and at the same time enabled to bear the necessary evils of it by the prospect of a better? Thus is the earth furnished with inhabitants, which are so well pleased with their lot as to be very unwilling to quit it, and yet are not without hopes of something greater. This seems to have been long since observed by the poet,

*Vilæusque Dii celant, ut vivere durent,
Felix esse mori.*

But 3dly, 'Tis alledged that many desire death in great afflictions, but are hindered from attempting to dispatch themselves either first, for want of courage; or 2dly, for fear of infamy; or 3dly, for fear of damnation. I answer, we see men live, and very fond of living, that are restrained by none of these. Men of approved courage, who profess to believe nothing after this life, and who may easily find ways of putting an end to it without suspicion of suicide; and yet they live on, and willingly bear all the inconveniencies of old age and diseases. Nay, no body is more desirous of life than such men, as was observed in the book C. 4. S. 8. Par. 7.

Farther, as to courage, we generally look on it as cowardice for a man to kill himself, and that contributes to make such an attempt infamous. But 2dly, Courage is the power of attempting hard, painful, and disagreeable things: therefore men's wanting courage to kill themselves, is a plain argument that life is an exceeding great good, and that a man can hardly be brought to such a degree of callousness of mind as to deprive himself of it.

As to infamy, that, as we said before, may easily be avoided. A dose of opium will do the business, and leave no room for discovery. But supposing disgrace to be a sure attendant on self-murder, these men are often notoriously profligate, and know themselves to be infamous for all sorts of vice, and yet disregard, nay glory in it. Can we believe such persons would be restrained from dispatching themselves for fear of hurting their memories after death, which they think they shall feel nothing of; when they despise much greater ignominy while they still live, and are sensible of it?

As to the fear of damnation, this can never move atheists; and yet none, as we observed, are more desirous of life: they profess

that the use of this power is neither disregarded, nor so rare as might appear at first sight. I

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profess to love it above all things, and call those fools and madmen that part with it on any account.

'Tis also remarkable that a kind of religious melancholy drives most men to self-murder; which proves that the fear of damnation is no such hindrance to it.

But lastly, 'tis urged that the vulgar are incompetent judges of the benefits and inconvenience of life, and therefore we ought to appeal to the sentence of those wise men who have truly considered them; and if such had leave given to live their lives over again, they would not accept it; as *Motbe de Vayer* affirms of himself. But I answer, that in this case there's no believing *Motbe de Vayer*, or any man on his word; the experiment was never made, nor had he ever the offer; and therefore he neither knew what he would have done in such circumstances, nor have we any security that he spake his true sentiments. Perhaps he was an old man, and knew he must soon die, and then it was wisely done to use all the means he could to put himself out of love with life, as that makes death more easy.

But 2dly, I observed before, that causes lose their efficacy at a distance, now the pleasures of life are past long ago with old men, and the inconveniences of age upon them; no wonder then that those distant pleasures do not influence them so much, as to make them desirous of living their whole lives over again for the sake of them: which is also a great providence to persons that are necessarily mortal, and seems the only way of reconciling them to death.

But 3dly, The proposing to a man to live his life again is not a motive equivalent to what is past. A man's being ignorant of futurity eases him from the anxiety that the knowledge of the unfortunate parts would raise in him, and leaves him at liberty to hope the best; which is a great part of the happiness of life. But when we offer him to live the same life over again, we cut off all his hopes; destroy the agreeable *novelty* of the good parts, and give him only a prospect of the uneasy passages that he must meet with in it: all which must make his life a thing quite different from what it was when he first lived it. But if we would propose to a man of sixty years to lengthen his life for sixty more, with the same strength and vigour he had at twenty, and let him take his chance; I doubt if one in a million would refuse the offer.

Lastly: Let us suppose that a man has lived happily many years, and at length falling into some great misfortune, or grievous pain, dispatches himself. This does not prove that he thinks the life God hath given no benefit, or worse than death; but only that the small and miserable part which remains to him is not worth the living. A man has a vessel of good wine which he drinks with pleasure to the dregs, then

own there are few who take notice of this in themselves, or observe that the pleasure which they feel in acting arises chiefly from the exercise of it. But nevertheless they do exercise it, and taste the pleasure arising therefrom. And it is the same in the exercise of this power as in some organs of sense, though we are entirely ignorant which they are, or of what nature, yet we use them, and by the use of them perceive external things. Thus we please ourselves in choosing, though we are not aware that things please us because they are chosen. Now that this is so will be evident if we examine those things which afford pleasure to both young and old, wise as well as foolish. For if the greater part of them have no manner of connection with the natural appetites, nor with the necessities of nature, it will appear that they have pleased us no otherwise than by virtue of election. Let us weigh the trifles of children, and the serious affairs of men; the temerity of fools, and the counsels of the wise; and it will be evident almost in all of them that they are neither determined by reason nor nature, but please by election only*. This, among other things, may appear from the diversions of *cards* and *dice*. Nothing is more agreeable to all, or pleases more; but upon no other account, if we examine it thoroughly, than because we *will* be thus employed.

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throws them out. Will any one conclude from thence that the man thinks a vessel of wine no valuable present? And yet this is exactly the case of such self-murderers.

From the whole, I think it manifest that life, such as it is, is a valuable good, and consequently fit to be bestowed on us by a good God. As it has more good than evil in it, 'tis plain we are obliged to him that gave it; and it is a very wicked and ungrateful thing for any one to pretend the contrary. Comp. Dr. Balguy's Divine Benevolence, p. 111.

* See more of this in Sect. 1. Sub. 5. par. 11, 12, &c.

Nay that *dire lust of rule* which bewitches mortal minds, and transports them beyond themselves; which cannot be satisfied unless the whole world be subdued, and even not then; this neither receives its origin nor approbation from nature or any innate appetite.

But the force of election is never more apparent than in some men's insatiable avarice, and continual study to heap up unprofitable riches, for no use, no end, but to satisfy their choice. Behold the covetous man brooding over his gold; a curse to his relations, a jest to his neighbours, a reproach to nature; depriving himself of food, sleep, rest, and other necessities, and yet applauding himself still. Why do these things please which are so unnatural, so absurd, so preposterous? Can they be explained otherwise than from this principle, that we are pleased with what we *choose*? This is still felt and pursued, though he that does this be not conscious that he is doing it, nor does he observe what it is which pleases him. It is not therefore the direction of the senses, or the impulse of animal nature only, which transports us into vices and unlawful acts; these are commonly done against the remonstrance of those appetites which are implanted by nature, against the remonstrance of sense and instinct, no less than reason, and the least crime we commit is in obeying them. We may learn then, to our great misfortune, that we are not entirely driven by the *impetus of animal nature*, and that this power of pleasing ourselves by election does not lie idle; but rather that it is the too great and inordinate use of it which transports us into wickedness.

VII. As to the third objection, *viz.* that the *corruption* of mankind is almost *universal*, it is to be observed in the first place, that elections

Elections produce the same effect in

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produce the same effect in the moral, as motion does in the natural world: neither is it any more to be expected that in our present state all elections should be consistent and uniform, than that all motions should be so. Now as contrariety of motion is a necessary cause of natural corruption, so the interfering of elections is of vice or moral corruption. God could indeed take away both, *viz.* by destroying motion and free choice; but while these are permitted, neither of the evils could be prevented in the present state of things.

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VIII. Secondly, We may observe that things are connected together, and have a mutual dependence on each other; on this account, as machines which require the most workmanship, may be stopped or disordered by the defect of a single nail or wheel: so the error or offence of one man, puts the rational system or society of mankind out of order. Any person, by almost one single free act, may destroy a house or ship, nay a city or a fleet by fire or wreck. Any king or governor can, by an easy and free act, overwhelm whole nations with war, rapine, slaughter and villainy. A father may beget sons, who being yet unborn, are sure of inheriting his diseases and infirmities as well as his goods. Nor could it be otherwise, while the nature and condition of men and of the earth are such as we experience them to be. Either therefore liberty and the connection of things must be destroyed, or these evils tolerated.

Vice and
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not impair
the beauty
of the
whole.

IX. Thirdly, 'Tis certain that God does not permit any bad elections, but such as may be reconciled with the good of the whole system, and has digested and ordered every thing in such a manner, that these very faults and vices shall tend to the good of the whole. For as in music, discords, if heard separately, grate and offend

offend the ear with harshness, but when mixed in consort with other notes, make the more sweet and agreeable harmony; in like manner bad elections, if considered alone, are looked upon as odious and detestable, but compared with the whole system, they promote and increase the good and beauty of the whole. For when they are tempered they become medicinal to each other by that very contrariety, and those which would poison separate, when mixed become a remedy.

For instance, One by a depraved choice raises an immense sum of money, and a vast estate, and either the same person or his heir by his vanity and profuseness, compensates for what he had acquired by his extortion, and perhaps does as much good by squandering away his ill-gotten wealth to the most idle purposes, as if he had bestowed all upon the poor. For he applies a spur to industry, whereas he would otherwise afford an handle to sloth. The rich man offends in luxury and idleness: the poor transgresses no less by too much labour and solicitude, which he indulges perhaps for no other end than to provide instruments of luxury for the rich: but each of them pleases himself in his choice, and it is almost the same thing with respect to the benefit of the Universe, as if one had converted to pious uses what he spent in luxury, and the other had laboured moderately to provide only what was useful. The same almost may be said of all vices, they are prejudicial, but only to the criminals themselves, or those that deserve to suffer; nay they are often beneficial to others; and so long as the whole comes to no harm, 'tis fit to allow every one the use of his own will, and let them suffer for their sin. God could indeed cut off all occasion of sin, by taking

away free election: But it is plain that this would be far from an advantage to intelligent agents. 'Tis our business to prevent bad elections; and if we will not, we suffer for our folly; But God will procure the good of the whole by our folly, no less than by our wisdom. (80.)

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(80.) We may add, and by our *sin*, no less than by our *righteousness*. Thus it may be said in a good sense that *private vices* (as well as private misfortunes) often become *public benefits*, though the authors be no less liable to punishment. But it will be objected, that this makes vice to be necessary for the public good, and therefore to be no vice at all, nor consequently punishable. For a tendency or opposition to the general happiness of our system, is the very nature and essence of virtue or vice: if then what is called my wickedness tends to the good of the world, how can I be punished for it? And if my actions promote the glory of God, *why doth he yet find fault?* We answer, vice naturally and in general tends to the misery of any system; so that if *all* were vicious, all would be wretched; and on the contrary, if every one were virtuous, all must be happy; to be vicious and to be productive of pain or misery, would then be convertible terms. But in a mixed, irregular state, where some pursue the rules of virtue and others do not, the case is very much altered; there pain or evil, and such actions as produce it, may often be the most proper means to remedy some greater evil, or procure some superior good; to reform a vice, or improve a virtue: in which case, though that way of acting which in general tends to misery, happens to be productive of some real happiness which could not have been produced without it; yet this is not sufficient to excuse or justify it; nor is it so much the consequence of its own nature, and attributable to its immediate author, as an effect of the superintendency of some other agent, who applies it, and makes it instrumental to some end of his own; who brings good out of evil, or from the evil takes occasions to do still more good than he could be conceived to have done without that evil.

All this I think may be supposed of God, and yet the different natures of good and evil continue fixed. Man, who cannot see all the consequences and connection of things, must be obliged to some general rules of acting, and whenever he deviates from these rules he does amiss; at least when he intends to act against the very *end* of these rules, *i. e.* the general good, he evidently sins; let the consequence of his acts be what it will. Thus the actions of a man may be often morally evil to himself, though they prove naturally good to some others: they may proceed from a bad intention in him, or he may be a transgressor by acting against his rule; and though God may have an occasion of *glorifying* himself thereby, of displaying his wisdom and goodness, &c. to a higher degree than they could otherwise have been exhibited; and therefore may reasonably permit the actions of this man, and convert them, either to the

punish-

X. If this be true, it is a sufficient vindication of the Divine goodness, notwithstanding such a plentiful crop of vices be permitted; nor need we insist upon a longer enquiry how this may be applied to particular cases; for whether this corruption was occasioned by the *fall of our first parents*, as truth itself declares, or by any other cause whatever, it is certain that God would never have permitted it, if it could have been prevented without greater damage to the whole. (81.) We may wonder indeed that

If this be applied to particular cases, it accounts for the universal corruption.

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punishment and correction of himself, or other sinners; or to the blessing of some righteous persons; yet the immediate author is nevertheless accountable both to God and man for such his actions. Instances of this kind are innumerable, and may be seen in *Sherlock on Providence*. See particularly what is required from God's goodness in a State of Discipline, p. 221, 224, 230, &c. 2d edit. or in *Simplicius on Epictetus*, p. 83, 4th ed. Lond. 1670.

What has been said here only relates to God's *permitting* moral evil, so far as it is a means of some prepollent good.

Colliber, in his *Impartial Enquiry*, &c. carries the matter farther, and supposes that God may, for the general good, decree some such acts as may be morally evil; which I can see no reason or necessity for supposing. How he endeavours to make this out, and reconcile it with the *holiness* and *justice* of the Deity, may be seen in Part 1. ch. 11. prop. 9. p. 94, &c.

(81.) Perhaps such a scheme as this of the *Fall* appears to be, from the representation given of it, and its effects in scripture, was necessary to make us duly sensible of the nature of good and evil; to acquaint us more fully with the moral perfections of the Deity (which could not have been so clearly exhibited to us if there had never been any room for the exercise of them) and consequently to bring us to an imitation of these perfections, and thereby to the greatest and most refined happiness that our better part is capable of. Man (as we have observed in note 89.) is a very imperfect compound being, who, by the constitution of his nature seems incapable of being made truly wise and virtuous, or which is the same thing, *morally* happy, on a sudden; he must therefore receive improvement gradually; and as he is to compleat his good habits by a series of virtuous acts, so it seems proper for him to be trained up by various dispensations, and a series of events adapted to the several faculties of his body and mind; the various constituent parts of his nature, and different sources of his happiness: accordingly we find that the happiness of man in his first estate was chiefly *animal*, to which an earthly paradise was exquisitely fitted; a change in this was probably requisite to introduce the *rational* or *moral*

that almost all mankind are polluted in wickedness, and that God puts no stop to the progress

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kind into the world, and to make him direct his thoughts to something higher than mere sensitive delights. This we are told was the method of Divine Providence with the *Jewish* nation in particular, who had a law of carnal ordinances to exercise them for a while, and lead them on to the expectation of better things; to spiritualize their notions by degrees, and prepare them for the heavenly doctrines of the *Messiah*. And why might not the like method be made use of in the government of mankind in general; or even all rational beings? What if God, willing to make known the greater riches of his glory, suffered our first parents to fall soon from that condition wherein he created them at first, in order to raise them and their posterity to a much higher state of glory and true happiness after? And who can prove that the former was not conducive to the latter? We believe that the bliss of Heaven will infinitely exceed the pleasures of a terrestrial Eden; why then should we not suppose that the less might be in some manner useful and introductory to the greater? Why might not a short life in paradise be as proper a state of probation for the virtues of this present world, as this world is for the glories of another? There is a passage concerning paradise in *Scott's Christian Life* * which confirms this notion: but it is the most fully explained by *D'Oyly* in his *first Dissertation*, c. 3. 31, &c. I shall transcribe to much as may be necessary to shew his general design. "If we consider our nature as it came in *innocence* out of the hand of its creator, God foresaw how very soon it would fall from its primitive purity, and therefore designed it farther for a *much happier* state, raised and refined by a clearer and more extensive *manifestation* of himself: but had it stood, the reward, (at least as far as we know) would have been the indefeasible possession of paradise in this world, the enjoying of an immortal life here on earth, chequered as it were with spiritual and sensitive, or animal pleasures. And for their conduct in that state God seems to have left them (one or two instances excepted) under the direction of the *law of nature*; the *spiritual* or religious part of which taught them to look up to him as the creator of the world, the lord and author of their being; and to fear and obey him as their Almighty Sovereign. The *civil* part of it furnished them with right reason, dictating what was necessary to be done in order to their well being in this world. So that had they stood, their happiness would probably have been—what that of mankind was afterwards—a mixture of *rational* and *sensitive*, or bodily enjoyments. And as to any knowledge of God, farther than that now mentioned; it may, I conceive, be thought reasonable to presume that they had the same awful sense of his *veracity*, as of any other attribute; and yet how very easily were they wrought;

gress of those vices which deform his work ;
but in reality this is no more to be wondered
at,

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“ wrought into a belief by the first story they heard, and from
“ they knew not whom, that he had acted *collusively* in barring
“ them the fruit of the *tree of knowledge*, designing by it only
“ to keep them down under the veil of ignorance ; and that
“ there was no such imminent danger of death consequent to
“ their tasting it, as they were at first made to believe ? What-
“ ever such knowledge therefore we suppose them to have had,
“ it may be doubted, its impressions were not vivid and forcible
“ enough to influence their wills to suitable efforts in *loving*
“ and *cleaving* steadily to him : since no one can love whom he
“ does not believe, and without faith 'tis as impossible to *love*
“ as to *please God* : so that those impressions could not conse-
“ quently be very instrumental in making an addition to their
“ happiness, as has been shewn above. Nay, as to *Adam* him-
“ self in particular, it may perhaps seem reasonable to think
“ he had not that profound reverence and awful regard for the
“ Divine Majesty which he might justly have been expected to
“ express, (though not under the circumstances of a *criminal*)
“ since after the fact committed, he seems attempting to screen
“ his guilt, even by throwing the blame *obliquely* upon God
“ himself, where he answers, The *woman* whom *thou* gavest
“ to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat [b.]”.

The author proceeds to enquire into the state of religion in
the antediluvian world, the patriarchal ages, and down to the
Jewish dispensation, and shews that mankind could not from
the works of creation and providence alone (which yet were
their only means of knowledge) have so extensive and perfect a
knowledge of God as was requisite to advance their happiness
properly so called, as rational agents, to any considerable de-
gree ; nor consequently to be the foundation of a worship
worthy of him. From whence he concludes, “ The faculties
“ of our rational nature must have lain dormant and useless as
“ to the greatest happiness it was capable of attaining by the
“ *exercise* of them ; and as to the highest honour and most ex-
“ alted worship it was in itself qualified to pay to the Divine
“ Majesty, unless he had pleased to make provision for the
“ farther *manifestation* of himself : which, in what manner he
“ has in his infinite wisdom and goodness determined to effect,
“ will appear by laying open the most *advantageous changes*
“ which have been made as to these and other respects, by the
“ appearance of *Christ in the flesh*. For if it be shewn, that by
“ that amazing transaction he has so displayed the infinite ex-
“ cellencies and perfections of his nature, as to give the utmost
“ possible scope to the whole rational creation, to exert their
“ noblest faculties, and strain them up to the most exalted as-
“ tonishing thoughts of, and seraphical *devotion* to him : if
“ farther he has thereby applied the most proper and forcible
“ means to rectify the *moral errors*, reform the vices, and
“ overcome

at, than that this inferior world is by motion
universally subjected to natural corruption.
For

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“ overcome the *daring wickedness* of mankind; and lastly, if
“ it be shewn that he has done all this in such a manner that it
“ could not have been effected *to so great advantage* any other
“ way; then will it be demonstratively evident, that whereas
“ he foresaw from all eternity, that man whom he had decreed
“ to create would abuse his *natural liberty*, and so, being
“ tempted, fall into sin: There was infinite reason on this ac-
“ count why he might have pleased also in his infinite wisdom
“ and goodness, to have decreed to permit it, thereby to open a
“ way for the stupendous *manifestation* of himself, as above
“ expressed. And particularly—that by what followed from
“ it, mankind might become capable of attaining far *greater*
“ *happiness* than they would have been, had our first parents
“ continued innocent.” p. 43.

How this author makes out the fore-mentioned particulars
may be seen in the remainder of his *Dissertation*.

See also *Jenkin* on the same subject [c.]

Now this is not, as *Bayle* objects [d.], “ To compare the
“ Deity to a father who should suffer his children to break
“ their legs, on purpose to shew to all the city his great art in
“ setting their broken bones. Or to a king who should suffer
“ seditions and factions to increase through all his kingdom,
“ that he might purchase the glory of quelling them.” But
rather like a king who permits some of his subjects to put their
seditious designs in practice, and to promote a revolt, in order to
illustrate his wisdom, power and goodness, more fully in reduc-
ing them to their duty, and to convince them more clearly of
the expedience and absolute necessity of obeying him, and there-
by to confirm them, or at least all the rest of his subjects, in a
well-grounded obedience to his government, in which their
happiness entirely consists: or like a father that finding his
children obstinately disobedient, suffers them sometimes to
wander astray, and fall into some dangers and inconveniencies,
and lets them smart under the misery which they bring upon
themselves; in order to make them more sensible of their need of
his assistance and direction, and thereby more dependent on
him for the future, and more subject to him, and therefore
more sure of happiness. This comparison is well explained by
Sherlock on *Providence*, chap. 7. p. 262.

Hence it will appear that we have reason to suppose that the
fall of man from earthly and animal delights, was designed to
raise him to a rational and heavenly state of happiness; and to
make way for such a wonderful display of all the divine attri-
butes in that expedient, as could not have been exhibited at all,
or not in so high a degree without it; and consequently that
this method was the very best even for *our own* system. But
if this supposition seem improbable, or insufficient, yet why
may

[c.] *Reasonableness of Christianity*, 2d vol. C. 12.

[d.] *Crit. Diss.* p. 2488.

For as contrariety of motions necessarily works a change in solid and heterogeneous bodies, and transposes them into another form and condition, whence necessarily proceed dissolution and concretion, corruption and generation : In like manner free choice necessarily administers occasion of sin to agents endowed with an imperfect understanding, and obnoxious to passions and affections. And as in the natural world the corruption and contagion of one thing extends itself to others, and acquires strength by spreading ; so also in the moral, if election once deviate to evil, the poison is diffused along with it, and seizes and infects all about it,

But yet both *natural* and *moral corruption* have their bounds, neither does God permit them to spread farther than is conducive to the good of the whole*. It may seem strange to us that he suffers both of them to wander over this world of ours without restraint ; but what is our world to the whole system of the Universe ? How small a part ! how next to nothing ! Let this

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may not all the misery in this system of ours promote and increase the happiness of some other [e.] ? We have good reason to believe that there is some connection between the different systems of the universe ; but have small ground to imagine ours the best, why then may it not be subservient to a better ? This indeed is only conjecture ; however, I think it would be no easy matter to confute it ; till which be done, we may very safely conclude with our author, that the *fall itself*, as well as all the sin and misery consequent upon it, could not have been prevented without greater detriment to the whole : and one may say the same of *Eve* as the poet did of the hand of *Mutius Scaevola* : *Si non errasset, fecerat illa minus* [f.]

[e.] See note 80.

[f.] See Leibnitz *Essais de Theodicee*, part 3. §. 239. Concerning the *Manner of the Fall*, see the first 7 chapters of *Revelation examined with Candour*, or the *Universal History*, c. 3.

* See Sherlock on *Providence*, ch. 7. p. 261, 2d. edit. and Scott's *Christian Life*, v. 2. c. 4. par. 3. p. 318, &c. 8v.

this whole earth of ours be stained with corruption of both kinds ; suppose it clouded and benighted with darkness and vice, yet it will be but like a very small spot in a very beautiful body, which is so far from lessening, that it increases the comeliness and beauty of the whole. The earth notwithstanding its obscurity, has its use and place in nature, which it could not commodiously fill if those things which render it liable to darkness and corruption were removed. The same must be said of men, they have their proper use and station, and in order to fill it commodiously, they were to be created of such a nature and disposition as might easily be corrupted with vice. Neither have we any more reason to conclude that all free agents are involved in evil elections, because this happens almost universally to men, than that all the regions of the heavens are subject to the same changes that our air is liable to. The whole work of God may be bright and beautiful, tho' that point which constitutes our world seem by itself rude and unadorned: and tho' some parts appear to us, who have not a view of the whole contexture, larger or less than the just proportion requires, yet they may agree with others in the most perfect symmetry. Nor need we presume upon the divine wisdom and goodness in the *moral*, any more than in the *natural* world. The crimes and vices themselves are very few in comparison of the free agents, (X.) and may contribute to the good of

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(X.) Concerning the prevalency of moral evil in the world, the objector is so confident as to declare that nobody can have the least doubt of it, and he dares say the author himself believed it. But the author professes himself to be of a quite different opinion. He firmly believes and thinks he very well comprehends that there is much more moral good in the world, nay

of the whole, no less than natural corruption does to the preservation of the system: Nay, one man's fault is often corrected by the vices of

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On this earth, than evil. He is sensible there may be more bad men, than good, because there are none but do amiss sometimes, and one ill act is sufficient to denominate a man bad. But yet there are ten good acts done by those we call bad men for one ill one. Even persons of the very worst character may have got it by two or three flagrant enormities, which yet bear no proportion to the whole series of their lives. The author doth not know the objector, nor with whom he converses; but he must profess that among such as he is acquainted with, he believes there are hundreds that would do him good for one that would do him hurt; and that he has received a thousand good offices for one ill one. He could never believe the doctrine of *Hobbs*, that all men are bears, wolves and tygers to one another; that they are born enemies to all others and all others to them; that they are naturally false and perfidious; or that all the good they do is out of fear, not virtue. He that describes mankind in this manner may give us cause to suspect that he himself is such; but if mankind were taken one by one, perhaps not one could be found in an hundred thousand that could truly own the character. Nay the very authors of this calumny, if their own characters were called in question, would take all possible pains to remove the suspicion from them; and declare that they were speaking of the vulgar, of the bulk of mankind, and not of themselves. Nor in reality do they behave in this manner toward their friends and acquaintance; if they did, few would own them. Observe some of those that exclaim against all mankind for treachery, dishonesty, deceit and cruelty; and you'll find them diligently cultivating friendships, and discharging the several offices due to friends, relations and their country, with labour, pain, loss of goods, and hazard of life itself: even where there's no fear to drive them to it, nor inconvenience attending the neglect of it. This you'll say, proceeds from custom and education. Be it so: However the world then has not so far degenerated from goodness, but the greater part of mankind exercise benevolence; nor is virtue so far exiled as not to be supported and approved, praised and practised, by common consent and public suffrage, and vice is still disgraceful. Indeed we can scarce meet with one, unless pressed by necessity, or provoked by injuries, who is so barbarous and hard-hearted as not to be moved with compassion, and delighted with beneficence to others; who is not inclined to shew good-will and kindness to his friends, neighbours, children, relations; and diligent in the discharge of civil duties to all; who does not profess some regard for virtue, and think himself affronted when he is charged with immorality. If any one take notice of his own or another's actions for a day together, he'll perhaps find one or two blameable, the rest all innocent and inoffensive. Nay, 'tis doubtful whether

of another, and the deformity stamped upon the works of God by the wickedness of some, is

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ther a *Nero* or *Caligula*, a *Commodus* or *Caracalla* [g.] (though monsters of mankind, and prone to every act of wickedness and fury) have done more ill than innocent actions through their whole lives.

'Tis to be observed in the second place, that one great crime, such as murder, theft, or rapine, is oftener talked of, more universally reported, and much longer remembered, than a thousand good, peaceable, generous deeds, which make no noise in the world, nor ever come to public notice; but are silently passed by and overlooked. Which very thing shews that the former are more rare than the latter, otherwise they would not be received with so much surprize, horror, and astonishment.

3dly, 'Tis observable that many things are done very innocently, which persons unacquainted with the views and circumstances of the actors esteem criminal. 'Tis certain we cannot judge of the goodness or badness of an action from bare appearances, but rather from the inward motions and intentions of the mind, and the light in which the thing appeared to the agent. *Nero* killed a man that was innocent, but who knows whether he did it out of premeditated malice? Perhaps some entrusted with the care of his person, or a flattering courtier, whom he is obliged to depend on, informs of this innocent man as plotting a conspiracy against the emperor's life, and urges dispatch lest he be first surprized: Perhaps the informer is imposed upon himself, and thinks it real: 'tis plain such circumstances very much lessen the guilt; and it is probable if the crimes of princes were weighed impartially, and the whole process laid open, many things might be offered which would greatly alleviate them.

4thly, Many things are done through ignorance of the law, and because those who commit them do not know that they are vicious; nay they are often esteemed virtues. Thus *St. Paul* persecuted the church; and himself owns that he did it out of ignorance, and therefore obtained mercy. How many things of this kind are done daily by such as profess different religions? 'Tis true, these are sins; but sins of ignorance, which easily obtain forgiveness; and as they do not proceed from an evil disposition, and depraved will, are scarce to be reckoned in the number of moral evils. Whoever falls foul on others out of a love of virtue, hatred of vice, or zeal towards God, does wrong; but ignorance and an honest heart make very much for his excuse. This consideration alone would take a great deal off from the number of wicked persons.

Neither does this excuse hold only in matters of religion, party prejudices have also a share in it; which induce men to extirpate with fire and sword those that they believe to be public enemies and traitors to their country. There's no error more pernicious to mankind, and which has produced more or greater crimes than this; and yet it arises from an honest mind. The

mistake

[g.] See Cardan's *Encomium of Nero*.

is obliterated by the supervening iniquity of others. By the vitiated elections of some,
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mistake lies here, that they forget that their country and commonwealth ought only to be defended by just and lawful means, and not at the expence of humanity.

5thly, Prejudice and surmise, makes many wicked that really are not so. The most innocent conversation between man and woman gives the malicious a handle to suspect and slander them. From any one single circumstance that usually attends a criminal action, the suspected person is found guilty of the fact itself: From one bad action a man's whole life is disparaged, and judged to be of the same tenor: If one member of a society be caught in a fault, all the rest are presumed to be as bad. 'Tis scarce credible how many are looked upon as scandalously wicked thro' such suspicions, who are very far from it. Confessors and judges in criminal cases know very well how small a part of common fame is true, how little it is ever to be trusted.

6thly, We must distinguish, and the law itself sometimes does, between such things as proceed from malice and premeditated wickedness, and those that arise from violence of passion, and disorder of mind. The guilt is very much extenuated when the person offending is under provocation, and as it were transported beyond himself by a sudden fit of resentment.

These things are all known to our most equitable Judge, who will pass a merciful, and not a rigorous sentence on us: and for these reasons, we believe, he forbids us to judge any thing before the time. We only know the outsides of things, and 'tis possible that such as seem to us the greatest crimes, would upon seeing the whole procedure, and making proper allowances, appear to be the least. Many virtues as well as vices lie in the mind invisible to human eyes: 'Tis speaking at random therefore to pronounce upon the number of one or other; and he that would from thence infer the necessity of an evil principle, ought to be esteemed a rash judge, and an usurper of God's tribunal.

Lastly, It may be observed, that the continuance and increase of mankind is a sure proof that there is more good than evil in the world. For one or two acts may have a pernicious influence on many persons, nay all immoral actions tend to the destruction of mankind, at least to the common detriment and diminution of them: Whereas a great many, even numberless good actions must necessarily concur to the preservation of each individual. If therefore bad actions exceeded the number of the good, there would be an end of human kind. We have clear evidence of this in those countries where vices multiply, the number of men continually decreases, and the place grows desolate; but upon the return of virtue and goodness 'tis again stocked with inhabitants.

This is a sign that mankind could not subsist if ever vice were prevalent; since many good acts are necessary to repair the loss which attends one bad one. One single action may take away the life of a man, or of several; but how many acts of
benevolence

a stop is put to the wickedness of many; and the virtue and happiness of a great many is confirmed and increased by the misery of a few; nay an opportunity of doing good is offered to such as are so disposed; which never could have been if none had abused their choice. (82.)

SUB-

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benevolence and humanity must necessarily contribute to the bringing up, educating and preserving every one?

From what has been said I hope it appears, that there is more good than evil among men; and that a good God might make the world, notwithstanding the argument drawn from the contrary supposition. But almost all of this is unnecessary; since the whole universe may have ten thousand times more good than evil, though this earth of ours had no one good thing in it. This world is too small to bear any proportion to the whole system; and therefore we can form but a very unequal judgment of it from hence. It may be it's hospital or prison; and can any one judge of the healthfulness of a climate from viewing an hospital where all are sick? or of the wisdom of a government; from a place of confinement where there are only madmen? or of the virtue of a people, from a prison where there are none but malefactors? Not that I believe the earth is really such a place; but I say it may be supposed; and any supposition which shews how a thing may be, destroys the *Manichean* argument drawn from the impossibility of accounting for it.

In the interim, I look upon this earth as an habitation abounding with delights, in which a man may live with comfort, joy and happiness: I own with the greatest gratitude to God that I myself have lived such a life, and am persuaded that my friends, acquaintance, servants, have all done the same; and I believe that there's no evil in life but what is very tolerable, especially to those who have hopes of a future immortality.

For a proof that the good of both kinds in the world is superior to the evil, see *Sherlock on Providence*, C. 7. *Hutcheson on the Passions*, p. 177, &c. *Leibnitz, Essais de Theodicee, or Memoirs of Lit.* Vol. 3. or *Chubb's Supplement to the Vindication of God's Moral Character. Tracts* p. 281, &c. or *Lucas's Enquiry after Happiness*, Vol. 1. Sect. 2. C. 2. Or *Dr. Balguy's Divine Benevolence* asserted, p. 112, &c.

(82.) Upon the whole, from that little which we know of the plan of divine providence in the formation and government of the moral world, it seems very reasonable for us to conclude concerning this, in the same manner as we did concerning the natural world, viz. That no considerable part of it can be altered for the better; or that no evil in it could either have been originally avoided, or may now be removed, without introducing greater.

Since the whole controversy depends upon the truth of this general conclusion, 'tis proper that we should be as fully satis-

SUBSECT. VII.

Wherein the Principles before laid down are applied to the Solution of some Objections:

I. FROM the foregoing principle, it seems not impossible to answer such objections as are commonly brought against the goodness and providence of God. For in the first place, when it is objected, that moral evil is not a necessary

Moral evils are not necessary in respect of free-will, but they are necessary with regard to God, so that he must either tolerate these or greater.

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fied as possible about the ground of it. But to attempt to demonstrate it by an induction of particulars would be infinite; I shall therefore choose rather to illustrate it by a review of some of the principles before laid down.

In the first place the Deity is supposed out of pure benevolence to have created as many immaterial beings of the noblest kinds as were agreeable to the order and convenience of his system; for his benevolence, being unbounded, seems to require this as much as it does the creation of any beings at all: The same benevolence also prompted him to produce more imperfect, mixed ones; because even those were better than none. He endowed these with an absolutely free principle of *vollition* and *action*, because such freedom was absolutely requisite to their happiness in every respect; especially to that for which he chiefly designed them; *viz.* goodness, virtue, or a resemblance of his own moral qualities, which is the supreme and only happiness of a rational being. He continues this freedom to them, though many abuse it to the corruption of their natures, and introduction of the greatest misery; because this abuse proportionably improves the nature, and increases the felicity of *others*; and so liberty still tends to the good and perfection of the whole: and this it may be conceived to do in the following manner. The miserable effect of the abuse of freedom by some persons in this world, makes all others much more sensible of the nature and consequences of sin, and more careful to avoid it; and renders them conscious of a double pleasure in using their powers aright: it exerciseth some virtues in them which could have no place without it; preserves, improves and exalts others; and consequently raises their whole nature to a higher degree of perfection than it could otherwise acquire. By parity of reason we may believe, that in the next world also the goodness as well as happiness, of the blessed will be confirmed and advanced by reflections naturally arising from their view of the misery which some shall undergo: (which seems to be a good reason for the creation of those beings who shall be finally miserable, and for the continuation of them in their miserable existence *.)

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* See the Appendix, § 2. part 9.

necessary concomitant of human nature, and therefore is voluntarily permitted by God, and that

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“ To have escaped hell, and to find ourselves in the unchangeable possession of salvation by the free mercy and goodness of God, and by the death of his own Son, are thoughts which must create a new heaven as it were in heaven itself; I mean they will enlarge our souls to the utmost capacity of our natures, and fill and actuate them with such divine ardors of love, as if we had been kept necessarily from all sin, seem impossible to have been raised in us †.”

This then we may, with reverence, presume to have been the principal design of God in permitting all mankind to bring themselves into such a dangerous estate, and some of them to suffer under it; and perhaps the same reason will hold for his permitting the *fall of angels*: For I think it plainly appeared from note 13. that the good, or rather *goodness*, of the creature, is properly the ultimate end of all the dispensations of God; and not his own *glory*, any farther than it is the means to it. His glory seems to be displayed no otherwise than as it is subservient and necessary to this end; and necessary it is; since goodness is of our own making, and must require knowledge, example, trial, &c. (see note 66.) as motives and means to further us in the gradual formation of a suitable temper and proper habits here, the enlargement and improvement of which will constitute our heaven hereafter, as *Scott* and *Rymer* have shewn at large.

Virtue therefore or *moral good*, cannot (as *Bayle* imagines) be *infused* into us miraculously; neither could God, according to the order of our ideas, have acquainted us with so much of his adorable nature, his *mercy*, *long-suffering*, *goodness* and *truth* (as he himself describes it) [b.] nor consequently have brought us to so great a resemblance of it, by any other method. The sole idea of a *Being infinitely perfect*, as *Bayle* objects [i.] would not do the business; nor if it were received and attended to, could it be of sufficient force to influence the minds of men, and regulate their practice, as is evident from daily experience. The present scheme of providence was therefore necessary, in order to produce in the generality of men, the greatest degree of *goodness* in this life, which is the ground and foundation of their *happiness* in the next. Even there also the memory of their former trials (as was hinted above) the consciousness of their own happy choice, when others did, and they had the same power and the same temptations to have done otherwise:—the joyful reflection on their past dangers and present safety;—and the natural consequence of all this, love and gratitude, and glory to God in the highest, and mutual congratulations of each other.—These and the like contemplations will (as *Jenkin* says) create a new heaven in heaven itself.

And

† *Jenkin*, 2d vol. ch. 12. p. 244, &c. 5th edit.

[b.] *Exod.* xxxiv. 6, 7. [i.] *Crit. Dict.* p. 2488.

that no benefit arises from the permission of it, as there does from hunger, thirst, and the passions: We must reply, that liberty of choice is a necessary concomitant of our nature; and that the exercise of it cannot be hindered, as we

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have

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And though in one respect a view of the misery which the damned undergo, might seem to detract from the happiness of the blessed, through pity and commiseration: yet under another; a nearer, and much more affecting consideration, *viç.* that all this is the misery which they themselves were often exposed to, and were in imminent danger of incurring; in this view, why may not the sense of their own escape so far overcome the sense of another's ruin, as to extinguish the pain that usually attends the idea of it, and even render it productive of some real happiness? To this purpose apply that of *Lucretius*, B. 2. pr.

*Suave mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis
E terrâ alterius magnum spectare laborem;
Non quia vexari quæquam est jucunda voluptas;
Sed quibus ipse malis cartas quin cernere suave est.*

But however this be, most of the foregoing reflections seem just and unexceptionable.

I shall conclude with another passage from *Jenkin*, [k.] which sets them in the strongest light.

"It must advance the happiness both of angels and men in heaven, that upon choice and trial they have preferred God before all things, and upon that find themselves confirmed and established in the perpetual and unalterable love and enjoyment of him. This very consideration, that they might once have fallen from his love, inspires them with the highest ardors of love, when they rejoice in the infinite rewards of so easy and short a trial: and the reflection upon the dangers escaped heightens even the joys of heaven to them, and makes an addition to every degree of bliss. The remembrance of their past sins and temptations, and the sense of their own unworthiness arising from that remembrance, will continually excite in the blessed fresh acts of love and adoration of God, who has raised them above all sin and temptation, and fixed them in an everlasting state of bliss and glory. The trial that the righteous underwent here, makes up some part of their happiness in heaven; and in what degree soever their happiness can be supposed to be, yet it is in some measure increased, and as it were endeared to them, by reflecting on their former state of trial, in which they were subject to temptation and sin."

See the same handled more distinctly in the first of *D'Oyley's* four Dissertations, ch. 10. Archbishop *Dawes's* 5th Sermon on the *Eternity of Hell Torments*, Argument the 4th, p. 73, &c. or *Scott's Christian Life*, vol. 5. p. 100.

have seen, without greater evils: In respect then of our own will, Moral Evil is not necessary, but in respect of God it is, *i. e.* he must either tolerate this evil or a greater; from hence also proceeds no small advantage to universal nature, as well as to mankind.

Cicero's
objection
taken from
a physician
who gives
his patient
wine when
he knows
that he will
die of it:
Or a father
who leaves
his estate to
a prodigal
son.

II. Secondly, Hence we perceive the answer to *Cicero's* objection in his third book, *De Natura Deorum*, where *Cotta* is introduced arguing in this manner: "If a physician knows that his patient, who is ordered to drink wine, will drink too much and die of it immediately, he is greatly blameable for allowing him it. Thus is this providence of your's to be blamed, which has given reason to such as it knew would make a perverse and wicked use of it." He proceeds also to confute those persons who endeavour to excuse providence, by saying, "That it does not follow that we are not very well provided for by the Gods, because a great many use their gifts perversely; since many make a bad use of their paternal estates, and yet these cannot be said to have no benefit from their fathers." To which he replies in these words: "I wish the Gods had not bestowed that cunning upon men which very few make a right use of: Inasmuch that this divine gift of reason and deliberation may seem to be imparted for a snare, and not a benefit to mankind." He adds, "We leave estates to our children in hopes of leaving them well, wherein we may be deceived; but how can God be deceived?"

'Tis shewn
that the
compari-
son is ill,
put be-
tween rea-
son and
free-will,

III. To all which we reply, First, That it is very unfair to compare the reason which is granted to man with wine given to the sick. For a sick person may enjoy life, and even recover, without wine; but man cannot be what he is without reason. The comparison there-
fore

fore is very improperly made between things and the that are *disparate*. Neither is there a less difference between *sinning* and *dying*. 'Tis very true, that no body would let a sick person take wine which he knew would kill him : but yet any prudent physician would allow his patient to take some meat, without which he knew that he certainly must die, though he understood that upon taking it the fever would increase a little. In like manner God has given reason to men, without which they would not be men, though he foresaw that some evils would arise from it. Reason therefore ought to be compared to life, and natural evils to the distemper. If then God were to take away reason lest men should use it amiss, he would be like a man that kills his son for fear he should be sick.

IV. Secondly, Human reason is improperly compared to a *patrimony*, since it is the very *being* and life of man : and who would rather put his son to death than suffer him to lead a sort of an irregular life?

V. Thirdly, We ought to remember that we are not born for ourselves alone, but are subservient to nature as parts of the universe : it is reasonable therefore that we should bear such things as tend to the good of the whole, though they be a little inconvenient to us. Now we have shewn before that the abuse of reason cannot be prevented without violence done to the laws of the universe, without detriment to mankind and to ourselves. If therefore a father could not refuse a son his inheritance, without breaking the laws of his country, without injuring his family, and lastly, without the loss of his son's life, he would not deserve to be blamed for giving him it, though he understood that he would make a bad use of it : Especially if he foresaw that the brothers of

the giving of wine ; and that God, if he took away liberty for fear we should sin, would be like a man that kills his son for fear he should be sick.

Reason is no less improperly compared to an estate.

It tends to the good of the whole, and of ourselves too, that we should have the use of free-will : for we had rather be what we are than in the condition of brutes, or without reason.

this prodigal would take warning by his error and become frugal, and that the estate which he spent would turn to their benefit. The same must be said of the physician who gives his patient a glass at his request; which if he did not give, the patient would immediately stab himself. Is he culpable if he compound for a less evil, in order to avoid a greater? More especially if many labour under the same distemper, and would not be convinced of the danger of using wine but by experiment, would it not be better to let one or two make the experiment, than that all should perish? God therefore knowingly permits us sick persons to use wine; for though we abuse it, yet our condition will be better than if he had not bestowed it upon us. If any urge that it is better not to be at all, than to be miserable, and consequently that it is more proper to deprive us of life, than to suffer us to abuse it. I answer as before, That we must make a distinction in misery; for where there is more evil than good, it is indeed preferable not to be, than to be involved in this kind of misery; but that which attends human reason is not such, by our own judgment. For we had rather be what we are, than not to be at all, or be without reason. Else why are we unwilling to change our condition with the brutes, or madmen, if we do not think it better than theirs?

Cicero has neither brought apposite similies nor given good advice to providence.

VI. But to conclude, *Cotta* in *Cicero* has neither brought pertinent similitudes, nor given good advice to providence. For God, as a physician, does not give wine to the sick person to kill him: but to one that will die, in order to prevent his dying sooner. Nor has the Divine Father given an inheritance to his Sons that they may waste it, but has bestowed it upon such as will waste it, lest they should want necessaries. Whereas if *Cotta* had been

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counsellor to providence, he would have advised physicians to let their patients die with thirst, lest some of them should drink too much; he would have persuaded parents either to kill their children, or never beget them, lest they should make a bad use of their estates when they came to age. (83.)

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VII.

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(83.) The same holds good against all Bayle's Comparisons, *Crit. DiA. Art. Paulicians. Rem. E. F. KΔΔ, &c.* p. 2488, where he says, that to permit men to sin rather than to overrule their wills, is like a mother that lets her daughters go to a ball, where she is sure they will lose their honour, and then pleads in her own justification, "that she had no mind to restrain the liberty of her daughters, nor to shew distrust of them." Again [i.] If a son should see his father ready to throw himself out of the window, either in a fit of frenzy, or because he is troubled in mind, he would do well to chain him, if he could not restrain him otherwise." And to name no more,

"To have regard to the free-will of a man, and carefully to abstain from laying any restraint upon his inclination, when he is going to lose his innocence for ever, to be eternally damn'd; can you call that a lawful observation of the laws of liberty? You would be less unreasonable if you should say to a man who gets a fall near you, and breaks his legs, that which hindered us from preventing your fall is, that we were afraid to undo some folds of your gown; we had so great a respect for its symmetry, that we would not undertake to spoil it; and we thought it was much better to let you run the hazard of breaking your bones," &c. [m.]

In all which this author evidently mistakes the case, by comparing the destruction of free-will (for this is the only thing, as we have proved, that can prevent the abuse of it) which quill has been shewn to be the very life and soul of man; to such mere trifles as confining his body, or discomposing his habit: whereas, from the foregoing account of the inestimable worth of liberty to each individual, and the many advantages that arise in common, even from the abuse of it; it plainly appears that to abridge, or which is the very same, to deprive a man of liberty, for fear he should abuse it, would, in regard to him, be just as good as to knock him on the head, for fear he should maim or disfigure himself. And with respect to the public, he would be far more unreasonable who should desire the absence of this liberty, because of its frequent abuse, than he who should wish that there were no such thing as fire, wind, or water, in the world, because so many men, houses and ships are destroyed by them.—As the rest of Bayle's elaborate similes are founded on the same misrepresentation, one hint of this kind is enough to invalidate them.

[i.] *Crit. DiA.* p. 2497. [m.] Page 2497.

VII. From the same principles we may solve that formidable objection of *Epicurus* against providence, which *Lactantius* enforces in his book *De Ira Dei**: and, as some think, does not sufficiently answer. It stands thus: "Either
 " God is willing to remove evils, and not able,
 " or able and not willing, or neither able nor
 " willing. If he be willing and not able, he
 " is impotent; which cannot be applied to the
 " Deity: If he be able and not willing, he is
 " envious; which is equally inconsistent with
 " the nature of God. If he be neither willing
 " nor able, he is both envious and impotent,
 " and consequently no God. If he be both
 " willing and able, which is the only thing that
 " answers to the notion of a God, from whence
 " come evils? Or why does he not remove
 " them?"

VIII. We must take the third of those four branches of his knotty argument; *viz.* That God neither will nor can remove evils. (84.)
 Yet

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* §. 12. p. 435. *Cambr. Edit.*

(84.) *Leibnitz* would rather say, "that God could take them away, but he was not willing to do it absolutely; and for a very good reason, because he should have taken away the good at the same time, and because he should have taken away more good than evil [o.]."

[p.] *Remarques*, p. 478.

The Answer of Lactantius is as follows. "Deus potest quicquid velit, & imbecillitas vel invidia in Deo nulla est: potest igitur mala tollere, sed non vult; nec ideo tamen invidus est: idcirco enim non tollit quia sapientiam (sicut edocui) simul tribuit, & plus est boni ac jucunditatis in sapientia, quam in malis molestiæ: sapientia enim facit ut etiam Deum cognoscamus & per eam cognitionem, immortalitatem assequamur, quod est summum bonum. Itaque nisi prius malum agnoverimus, nec poterimus agnoscere bonum: sed hoc non vidit *Epicurus*, nec alius quiquam; si tollantur mala tolli pariter sapientiam, nec ulla in homine remanere virtutis vestigia, cujus ratio in sustinenda & superanda malorum acerbitate consistit. Itaque propter exiguum compendium sublatorum malorum, maximo & vero & proprio nobis bono careremus."

Yet we deny the consequence. He is neither to be esteemed envious nor impotent, because he does not work contradictions: But it is a contradiction that all evils should be removed, without removing the whole universe, which would be the greatest of all evils. For some kind of evils adhere (as we have often declared) to the very natures of things, and cannot be removed while any created nature continues. For when a circle is once made, all the lines drawn from the centre to the circumference must necessarily be equal; neither is God impotent, because he cannot make them unequal while it continues to be a circle: in like manner, when he has made a creature, he must necessarily tolerate the evil of imperfection in it, which is as essential to it as an equality of the *radii* is to the circle. When therefore matter, motion and free-will, are constituted, he must necessarily permit corruption of things, and the abuse of liberty, or something worse. For these cannot be separated (as was shewn) without a contradiction. God therefore is no more impotent because he cannot remove these evils from things while the things themselves remain, than because he cannot separate an equality of the *radii* from a circle. The consequence, then is false, which charges God with Impotence because he cannot remove evils.

IX. Neither is that assertion less false which attributes it to envy that he will not. For he that always wills the best, and the least of many evils, is absolutely good, and the farthest from envy: and we have shewn that this is the case with respect to God. If a person had his choice either to abolish or not to abolish evil, he would be malicious if he did not abolish it. But when the choice is between this and a greater evil, he that chooses the less is far from
God always chooses the least of evils, and therefore is not envious.
being

being malicious. The Divine Goodness therefore reduces God to this difficulty, that he must choose to make either no creature at all, or an imperfect one; either no such thing as matter and motion, or tolerate contrariety and corruption in things; either no free agent, or admit a power of sinning. He must necessarily have chosen one of these, and 'tis easy to say whether of them was more directly opposite to envy.

God could neither be infinitely powerful if he were not able to create imperfect beings, *i. e.* creatures; or things that are contrary to each other; *i. e.* evils: nor infinitely good, if he had been contented in himself, and denied existence to every thing else.

X. To speak my thoughts, I dare confidently, but with reverence, pronounce that God would neither have been infinitely powerful nor good, if he could not have made any thing which we call evil. For there are some things possible which are not consistent with each other, nay, are repugnant and mutually destructive, *i. e.* are evils to each other: if God were unable to produce any of these, how would he be infinitely powerful, since he could not do all that is possible? Nor would it be less injurious to his goodness to be unwilling, for by this means his power must lie idle and never effect any thing at all; since nothing can be simply good and exempt from all manner of evil, but God himself. If therefore the Divine Goodness had denied existence to created beings on account of the concomitant evils, he might really have been esteemed envious, since he had allowed none to exist beside himself; and while he refused to admit any kind of evil, he would have rejected all the good. Thus vanishes this *Herculean* argument which induced the *Epicureans* to discard the good Deity, and the *Manicheans* to substitute an evil one.

Epicurus is deceived who endeavours to attribute

XI. *Epicurus* then is both a deceiver and deceived himself, when from the present evils he concludes against the omnipotence and goodness of the Deity. Whereas, on the contrary,

God

God would neither have been powerful nor good if he had not tolerated evils. From a competition or (if we may be allowed the expression) a *conflict of two infinities*, i. e. omnipotence and goodness, evils necessarily arise. These attributes amicably conspire together, and yet restrain and limit each other. There is a kind of struggle and opposition between them, whereof the evils in nature bear the shadow and resemblance. Here then, and no where else, may we find the primary and most certain rise and origin of evils; and here only must we look for that celebrated principle of the ancients,

Νεῖκος ἀλόμενον καὶ θῆρις αἱματόεσσα.

The Pestilential Strife and Bloody Fight.

Empedocles,

A P P E N D I X:

Concerning the Divine Laws.

S E C T. I.

Why God made Laws when he knew that they would not be observed.

The divine laws are either natural or positive.

I. **T**HE divine laws are either those which God has implanted in the nature of every being, or those which he has published to mankind in a particular manner, by certain *messengers* chosen and sent for this purpose. For since a *law is the will of a superior sufficiently promulged to an inferior, and attended with the hope or fear of reward or punishment*: 'tis plain, that God may be conceived to have made this declaration of his will to his creatures two ways: First, by giving them such a nature as requires that some things be done, and others avoided, in order to it's preservation: those things which are made known to us in this manner, are commanded or forbidden, we say, by the law of nature: and that law which thus discovers itself to our understanding, we look upon as the will of God promulged to his creatures: for we are very certain that God according to his goodness, wills the good and preservation of all things which he himself has made, as far as is possible: and consequently hates any thing that is hurtful to the creature.

Particular laws ought to give

II. Now it must be observed, that these natural laws are either *universal* or *particular*; and

'tis

'tis fit the particular ones should give way to the more universal, and those of less moment to the more important. For instance, 'tis of the nature of body that it be capable of motion, that it be stopped and broken in pieces by meeting with others in motion, and this is the *universal law* of bodies. But it is of the nature of an animal to preserve itself, and use its utmost endeavour, that the parts of its body be not separated or dissolved, and this is the *particular law* of animals.

place to more general ones, since all kind of repugnancy could not be avoided.

Now since these laws are sometimes inconsistent, it is reasonable that the latter, as being a particular one and of less consequence, should yield to the former: and this is evidently the will of God. If it be asked, Why did God make laws which in some respect interfere with one another? I answer, as before, That this could not be avoided without a greater evil: since therefore of two evils the less is to be chosen, God will'd that particular laws and those of less consequence, should give place to the more universal and those of greater importance; rather than remove that inconsistency, there arising less inconvenience to nature from thence.

III. The same must be said of those laws which relate to morality. 'Tis the universal law of free agents, that they shall please themselves by election, but there are some things eligible which may be prejudicial to some particular beings. Now it is better, as was said before, that particulars be injured, than that the universal law of free agents be violated. We must suppose then that God willed this as the less evil of the two. Men are permitted therefore to abuse their free will, and 'tis necessary that God should tolerate either this inconvenience or a greater. But it is not at all

The same must be said of those laws which relate to the moral world.

neces-

necessary that man should make an evil choice, therefore he alone is faulty; for it proceeds from his act, that God is reduced to a necessity of choosing the least among many evils.

Why God is said to be angry with sinners, since his will is always done.

IV. From hence it appears, that all the laws of nature are always observed according to the will and intent of God. For he willed that the particular should give place to the general ones, and that man should sin rather than be driven from sin by force. You'll say, why then is he angry at sinners, since nothing is done against his will? I answer: When anger is attributed to God, 'tis *after the manner of men* *; whereas it is ordered and effected by the very nature and constitution of things, that whoever does any thing in opposition to any law of nature, though it be a particular one, shall bring some inconvenience upon himself. By which contrivance God has taken care that the very least law should not be violated rashly and without necessity. When an offender therefore, who willingly breaks a particular law, brings certain misery upon himself, God, who wisely coupled these together, is said to be *angry*: because a man in anger would not take any other or more effectual revenge on the person that provoked him; and the evil which naturally attends a bad election, is to be esteemed a punishment inflicted as it were by an angry God.

God may alter or add to the laws of nature, and give us assurance that he intends to do so; hence the origin of positive laws and a revelation.

V. As to the second sort of divine laws, *viz.* the *positive*; 'tis certain that God, who is the author of nature, and established the laws of it, can either alter them or add to them when he sees it proper. Neither does he want means, whenever he pleases, to assure mankind that he will do it. When therefore we find any alteration in the laws of nature, we may from hence conclude, that God demands our attention.

And

* See Chap. 1. §. 5. par. 10. and No. C.

And hereupon we esteem the promulgation of a new law recommended to us by this token, to be an authentic declaration of the will of God. In this manner were the *Mosaic* and *Evangelic* laws established; viz. by *miracles*.

VI. But it is usually asked, Why did God establish and promulge those laws which he knew men would not observe? It must be answered, That these laws are means of acquainting free agents with what is expedient for them, and of moving them to the choice of it. Neither does their nature admit of any that are more efficacious: for it is such as must be persuaded and not compelled. Notwithstanding therefore God knew that his laws would not be observed by all, yet he proposes them to all, for by this means a great many learn their true interest, thankfully embrace the laws and obey them; and the rest are no worse for them, since they would be involved in the same evils which they feel from the sanction of the laws, and perhaps greater, though these laws had never been. (85.)

Laws are the means of informing free-agents of what is useful or prejudicial to them.

But

NOTES.

(85.) 'Tis a very useful observation which our author makes in this place, and illustrates in the following section, par. 3. viz. that the divine laws (especially those of the *Christian* dispensation) are chiefly *declarations* of the natural and necessary effects of sin, or *directions* and *means* to avoid them; which necessary effects are conceived to be the real *sanction* of these laws. Consequently these laws cannot properly bring us into a worse state than we should have been in without them.—They do not introduce a new train of arbitrary and additional evils, but on the contrary are designed in pure goodness to lessen the number of the old ones,—to forewarn us of the natural consequences of our own acts and habits, and prevent those moral evils to which we are exposed by the very constitution of our beings;—which the universal law of liberty makes it possible for us to incur, and impossible for God to hinder by any other means, as has been shewn above. Farther; this notion, that most of the misery both in this world and the next is the *necessary consequence* of sinful actions according to the fixed laws of nature, rather than any positive punishment immediately inflicted by the Deity, will, I am apt to think, have the greatest influence

But granting that some who transgress the laws meet with greater and more inconveniencies than they would have done without them, 'tis better that some should suffer inconveniencies through their own fault, than that all should be deprived of the benefit of the divine laws; God therefore out of infinite goodness, which is always inclined to the best, promulged those laws which he knew all men would not observe.

S E C T.

N O T E S.

influence on most men to deter them from such actions. I am sure I find myself more deeply affected with this reflection, that misery will follow of course upon some certain practices, and that by indulging them I naturally and necessarily destroy myself, than I should be by a prospect of the very same degree of pain threatened as a punishment for such practices. And the reason of this is evident: I am apt still to hope that the latter may possibly be remitted, but the former leaves no room for hope. Again, A due attention to this doctrine that all our moral happiness in this world must be of our own making, and that disordered, evil affections, irregular and perverse habits, &c. will constitute a great part of our *hell*, in the next, (which might be shewn in the same manner as was hinted concerning virtuous habits, in note 79. p. 366. but is rendered unnecessary by the authors there mentioned.) This doctrine, I say, if rightly understood and applied, would discover the weakness of all such pretences to salvation as are built upon the bare belief of, or confidence in what any other has done, or can do for us; or even of what we do ourselves purely by way of *opus operatum*, i. e. as ultimately relying on the bare discharge of any duty, and not using and applying it as a means to some farther end, *v. g.* on *prayer*, as the mere labour of the lips; on the *sacrament* as a charm; on *repentance* as a simple act entitling us to happiness; in short, on any thing which does not enter the heart and improve the temper. If heaven be not so much the *reward* of religion, as the *natural consequence* of a religious frame of mind, and *vice versa*; then how absurd is it for us who are aspiring after that state, to stop by the way, to rest in any particular acts of religion as arbitrary institutions procuring, and as it were *purchasing* it for us; instead of using them as, what they really are, fit instruments to *work out* our own salvation by *producing* this frame of mind in us; as proper helps and assistances enabling us to *acquire* this heavenly temper? And on the other side, how vain must be our hopes of escaping hell by any such methods as these, if we still carry our hell within us?

*The mind is it's own place, and in itself
Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heav'n.*

See PAR. 11. of the following Sect.

S E C T. II.

Concerning Divine Rewards and Punishments.

I. **I**T was proper to say something concerning these, since punishment is a natural evil, *viz.* pain, disappointment of appetite, or damage annexed to a wrong choice, by a foresight whereof we might be deterred from making a wrong choice. In these consists the power and efficacy of laws, nor would they be of any force without them. Now good or evil, *i. e.* rewards and punishments, may be annexed, either by nature, or by laws of positive institution.

II. As to *nature*, all evil is prejudicial to it, *i. e.* interrupts its course: evil therefore proceeds from some violence done to nature, and that which offers violence must necessarily suffer it; for every natural action has re-action joined with it. According to the laws of mechanism then evil done to another is for the most part repayed with evil to the doer, *i. e.* with punishment. By which piece of machinery or contrivance God has manifested both his wisdom and goodness. For by this means he has taken effectual care that none should transgress the laws of nature without punishment, or offer unnecessary violence to the appetites of others; or if it were necessary to offer it, yet that it should not be without some inconvenience to him that does offer it. It is better that a creature should be able to provide for its own safety with some inconveniencies, than that it should be at liberty to offer needless violence to others, and the laws belonging to their particular nature be broken to no manner of end: for by that means there would be more evils in nature than

Punishment is a natural evil connected with a depraved choice.

Evil is violence done to nature; but every natural action has re-action correspondent to it: therefore he that does violence must necessarily suffer violence, that none may sin without punishment.

there are at present, and they would be multiplied unnecessarily. Hence it appears how worthy it is of God to have formed the nature of things in such a manner, that from the very constitution of them the intemperate, injurious, the thief, robber, adulterer, proud, envious, &c. should have something to dread. If any one ask why there are not such punishments as might effectually imprint a lively sense upon our minds, and thereby totally restrain us from a wrong choice? I answer: A greater evil must not be done on account of a less; but if the punishments and dread of them were increased to such a degree as to be sufficient to prevent all kind of evil, they themselves would be the greatest of all evils, and the dread of them would more deeply affect, and be a greater affliction to the minds of men, even of those who would not do amiss, than the evils themselves are, for the prevention of which these punishments are proposed by God. It was therefore fit that there should be some measure in punishments; *viz.* lest by being always present to the mind of mortals they should prove a greater prejudice to our ease and happiness, than those very evils which are prohibited under the penalty of them would be, were we forced to undergo them.

Positive laws acquaint us with the punishments which attend depraved Elections from the nature of the thing, rather than inflict new ones.

III. As to the punishments which God has affixed by way of *sanction to positive laws*, we must affirm that they are to be esteemed as admonitions and notices of the mischiefs consequent upon evil elections, rather than that God himself will immediately inflict them. Natural conscience is for the most part sufficiently able to inform us what is good and what evil: but it was impossible for nature to acquaint us with all the consequences which attend our actions in an infinite train and continuance of things.

Now, lest we should be involved in evils un-
 awares, and contrary to our expectations, God
 has informed us by positive laws what our con-
 dition must be if we will indulge ourselves in
 evil elections. And has promulged them by
 way of *punishments* denounced, rather than by
 simple *prediction*, that they might enter more
 deeply into our minds, and oblige us to take
 care of ourselves.

IV. But if there be any thing which is not
 reducible to this head, and seems to prove an
immediate infliction by the Deity, neither is that
 done without reason. For it is fit that God
 should remove that being out of the world
 which cannot be made consistent with the good
 of the universe: and reform that by chastise-
 ment which would otherwise, through its irre-
 gular motion, prove offensive to the author,
 and all about it. Punishments then are an-
 nexed to evil elections in order to *prevent* them,
 and inflicted to *correct* and *amend* the offenders,
 or to *deter* others from the like offences. If
 therefore the appointment and infliction of pu-
 nishments prevent greater evils than they are
 themselves; it follows that God has chosen the
 better part in establishing and exacting them.

V. It may be asked, how this can agree with
 the punishments of the wicked, which the
Christian religion declares to be *eternal*? For in
 the first place, 'tis plain that they are not in-
 flicted either to reform the guilty (for there is no
 room for reformation in hell) or to deter others
 from the like guilt: for sin will be at an end,
 and the very possibility of sinning taken away
 before they shall be inflicted. They can neither
 be of use to the dead therefore, nor to the
 living; for they are kept secret while they
 might be of any use. Consequently there seems
 to be some other end of these punishments, *viz.*

Hi h 2

That the
 decreeing
 and inflict-
 ing punish-
 ments pre-
 vent great-
 er evils.

'Tis ask'd
 in the 1st
 place, how
 this can be
 reconciled
 with eter-
 nal punish-
 ments,
 which
 don't seem
 capable ei-
 ther of re-
 forming
 the punish-
 ed, or of
 being a
 warning to
 others?

'Tis ask'd
 in the 2d
 place how
 punish-
 ments can
 be eternal,
 since it is
 agreeable
 to good-
 ness to
 have crea-
 ted all
 things in
 such a
 manner
 that no-
 thing

to might re-
 pent of it's
 being?

to make satisfaction to the divine *vengeance* for the injury and affront offered to his majesty.

VI. Secondly, These eternal torments appear to be not very agreeable to the divine œconomy in another respect. For it is to be observed that God has framed all things and disposed them in such a manner, that nothing may repent of its having been made by him: for when it is come to this that it's misery exceeds it's pleasure, the being perishes, and is withdrawn from both. Not to *exist* therefore, or not to perceive any means of relief, is the very worst condition, as was shewn before†. A violent object not only destroys the sensory but takes away the sense itself; the divine goodness providing that no creature should be worse by its existence than if it had not existed. And as far as appears, thinking beings ought to be dealt with after the same manner, *viz.* when pain, sorrow, fear, anxiety, and the rest of the passions and affections increase to so great a degree that the mind receives more evil than good from the sense of it's existence, 'tis reasonable that the excess of these should extinguish thought itself, as the excess of bodily pains destroys the sense: otherwise these miserable beings seem to receive no benefit from God, since providence has reduced them to a state worse than that *non-existence* in which it found them. [p.] Neither does it seem a sufficient vindication of the divine goodness, to say, that this befalls them through their own fault, for it is hardly agreeable to goodness to have placed any being in that state which was obnoxious to such excessive misery: for who would choose existence attended with a danger that so very much over-ballances it? He is not a
wise

† Ch. 4. § 8. par. 5. [p.] See Matth. 26. 24. and Mark 14. 24.

wife man that exposes all his estate to hazard, nor a good man that obliges any one to do it.

VII. Thirdly, Whatever is perpetual must have a *natural and perpetual cause*; for a perpetual miracle is not to be expected. If therefore the punishments of the wicked be eternal, it seems necessary for these punishments to arise from the laws and constitution of nature. For it is scarce conceivable how a state of violence should be perpetual. I have proposed these objections at length, lest I should seem to have declined them on account of their difficulty. (86.)

VIII. As to the first objection, I answer: It appears from the light of nature that there shall be *future punishments*, but not that these shall be *eternal*: we must not therefore enquire of natural reason why they are inflicted; for they belong to revealed religion, by which they are denounced: that is, there may be a reason for them, but such as is beyond the mere natural sagacity of man to discover. Now we find

H h 3

many

NOTES.

(86.) The chief of those authors who seem to oppose the strict, absolute eternity of hell torments, are Tillotson, Vol. 1. S. 3. & Burnet, *de Statu Mort.* Ch. 10. p. 290, &c. Swind, in the Appendix to his Book on Hell. The author of the Annotations on *Lux Orientalis*, p. 73, 74. Collier in his *Impartial Enquiry*, p. 105. &c. and his *Essay on Revealed Religion*, p. 142, &c. Bayle, *Episcopius*, and the *Fratres Poloni*. Murault and the author of *Considerations on War*, 1758. Hartley's *Observations on Man*. Bourn's *Disc.* V. 1. D. 15. See also Fabricii *Delectus Argumentorum*, &c. C. 47. p. 720. and two pieces in the *Phoenix*, *Whiston's Discourse*. Or White's *Restoration of all things*. Printed A. D. 1712, in the preface to which many other authors both ancient and modern, are cited to the same purpose.

Some of those who have particularly insisted on the defence of it are Dawes, Jenkin, Fiddes, Lupton, Lake, Horbery, Seculock on *Providence*, Ch. 2. and on a *future State*, Rymer, part 1st. chap. 7. Nichols *Conference with a Theist*, part 3. p. 309, &c. Whitby, *App. to Thess.* Scott's *Christian Life*, vol. 5. p. 91. &c. Bruo. and *Discourse* 2d. p. 435, & 2d. vol. of his works, fol. Patrick. *Witnesses of Christianity*, part 2. Bates on the *Existence of God*, &c. Chap. 12. See the following note and N. 90.

'Tis asked 3dly, how punishments can subsist without a natural cause?

To the first it is answered that eternal punishments are made known to us by revelation, and that God is not therefore obliged to reveal how or why they are so: perhaps the reason is above our comprehension.

many things of this kind in nature; it does not therefore follow, because the goodness of God has revealed to us that the punishment of the wicked shall endure for ever, that he is also obliged to reveal why and how that comes to pass. For perhaps it may be above the power of our mind to conceive it in the present state of things.

It does not appear but that the punishment of the wicked may be of use to the good.

IX. Secondly, Who will undertake to shew that the eternal punishment of the wicked has no tendency towards confirming good men in the choice of their duty? (87.) If God makes use of *means* for that end, and doth not immediately exert his omnipotence alone, scarce could any other more effectual means be found out to make the blessed approve themselves in their choice conformed to the divine will, and persevere therein, than the continual contemplation of those miserable beings who have done otherwise. Election is matter of freedom, and not to be excited or prevented by other means than a representation of *good* or *evil* to the understanding. Since therefore God has undertaken to conduct and preserve an almost infinite multitude of thinking Beings to all eternity, thro' all the changes and successions of things, in as great a degree of happiness

NOTES.

(87.) See A Bp. *Dawes's* Sermon. 5. p. 73, &c. or Note 81. Or it may be for the perpetual benefit and improvement of some other systems; see the latter end of Note 81. Or perhaps for a standing monument and warning to the heathen world during their state of probation, which for ought we know, may be extended beyond this life, as well as that of Christians themselves, &c.

See *Scott's Christian Life*, 8vo. 2d Vol. p. 551.

Something of this kind, I humbly apprehend, must be conceived as the reason for hell-torments, in order to make them consistent with perfect goodness [g.] how long soever this may be necessary to continue, or whatever we suppose the nature of these torments to be! of which below.

[g.] See Note 13.

ness as is possible, without violence done to elections; where is the wonder if he leave a few to the misery which they brought upon themselves, thereby to give the rest a warning how much they ought to stand upon their guard against the like? There is no necessity therefore to attribute eternal punishment to the divine *vengeance*, (nor is there properly any such thing in God, but it is ascribed to him, as other human passions are, in condescension to our capacity.) For since these punishments may be conceived to promote the good of the whole, they may arise from the *goodness*, and not the *vengeance* of the Deity.

X. As to the second objection, The matter is yet in debate whether it were better to be miserable than not to be at all, and there are arguments on both sides. (88.) 'Tis manifest that, what the objection mentions, *viz.* those evils which over-balance the desire and happiness of life put an end to life itself, and that such objects as are hurtful to the sense, at length destroy it; the same seems to hold good in thinking substances, *viz.* those things which affect the mind to a higher degree than it is able to bear, may in like manner put an end to it. For they may be supposed either to drive us to madness, or so far to disorder the thinking faculty, as to make us think of nothing at all. Who can tell whether the punishment of the

To the second 'tis replied, that the matter is yet in debate whether it is preferable to be miserable or not to be at all. The misery of the damned may be like that of madmen.

H h 4

wicked

NOTES.

(88.) A most elaborate disputation on this subject may be seen in Bp. Barlow's Remains, p. 470, &c. But our author, in the last Subsect. of his book, par. 5, &c. very reasonably grants, *That non-existence becomes preferable to existence whenever the sum of misery exceeds that of happiness, and evil becomes predominant on the whole*; and therefore if he takes this question in the same sense, he had no great occasion to start it. Nay the question will be about an absolute *impossibility*, if any misery which over-balance the happiness of life do *ipso facto* put an end to life, as our author maintains in this very paragraph; concerning which notion see Note 37.

wicked may not lead them into a kind of phrensy and madness? Thus they may indeed be very miserable, and become a sad spectacle to others; they may be sensible of their misery also, and strive against it with all their power; but while they do not observe or believe that it is founded in perverse election, they may hug themselves in the cause the effects whereof they abhor; being still wise in their own opinion, and as it were pleasing themselves in their misery.

Thus the more they labour under it, the more they embrace the cause of it, and thereby become their own hindrance from ever getting free; and will not suffer themselves to be any thing but what they are. This we see done daily by mad and frantic persons, and reckon it part of their unhappiness. The divine goodness therefore is not to be charged with cruelty for letting them continue in that existence, though it be very miserable, when they themselves will not have it removed: or for not altering their condition, which they utterly refuse to have altered. 'Tis better for them indeed not to be, than to be: but only in the opinion of wise men, to which they do not assent. For they indulge themselves in their obstinate election, and though every way surrounded and oppressed with woes, yet will they not alter what they have once embraced. We have frequent examples in this life resembling this kind of obstinacy.

The damned choose their miserable state, as lovers, angry, ambitious, envious persons

XI. We see perverse people voluntarily undergoing pains, afflictions, torments, and even death itself, rather than repent of their resolution and change what they have once determined in their mind. Nor is it uncommon for some to indulge and in a manner *please* themselves in their very miseries. Thus the sorrowful love all such things as aggravate and foment

ment their grief: and in like manner the envious, the angry, the ambitious, the despairing: not that they are insensible of uneasiness under these passions, or do not believe themselves to be miserable; but because they had rather have that misery so long as they enjoy their choice, than want it and them too; or at least they can persist in it, because they do not observe that this misery arises from thence. When therefore the wicked obstinately oppose themselves to God, and refuse to make their elections conformable to his will, they take delight perhaps in that very opposition: to hate God, to disobey his commands, and strive against him with all their power, is pleasing to them; and though they see themselves overwhelmed with innumerable evils, yet they had rather endure them all than repent. As men that are desperately in love, ambitious, envious, choose to bear torments, loss of estate, and hazard of life, rather than lay aside these foolish and bewitching affections. We may easily conceive then how the wicked in hell may be in very great misery upon the increase of their obstinacy and folly, and yet unwilling to be freed from them. All see and exclaim against the folly, misery, and madness of those men who spend their estate in vice, impair their health, and bring on an untimely death; and for no other end but because they will do so: yet they persist in this, and their obstinacy increases with their evils. These are some *preludes* of the misery of the damned, and from hence we may understand that these persons are extremely miserable, and yet will not be set at liberty (89.) It

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(89.) From hence likewise we may understand what a natural, absolute, and indispensable necessity there is for watching over all our *habits, affections, appetites, associations*; for curbing our passions, and correcting our desires by *reason*; for taking a strict
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It may be objected, that these miserable beings may receive some kind of *pleasure* from their *elections*. But we place felicity not barely in the *act* of *choosing*, but much more in the *enjoyment* of the objects chosen. The more obstinately therefore any one chooses absurd and impossible things, the more miserable will he be when frustrated of his choice; and we may imagine the damned to be always frustrated: nevertheless, after so much warning and experience, they do not intend to alter their elections, but still persist in them, oppressed with the sense and weight of their misery, and plunged in deep despair. For it is possible that they may be regardless or ignorant that there is no other way for them to be freed from these miseries, but by altering their elections, and not know how to do this, so as to persist in them for

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and constant care that these be neither violent, irregular, nor fixed on improper objects in this life, if we hope to avoid misery in the life to come. For if these accompany us into the other world, (and if we consider what *Scott* and *Rymer* have said upon the subject, it will appear infinitely probable that they do) the same or greater unhappiness must unavoidably attend them there. If we shall have any memory in the other world of what passed in this, (which we must have, in order to give us either a good or evil *conscience*; and to make us capable either of reward or punishment in that respect) how probable is it that we shall then also feel the force of all those *habits* which in this life were so strong as to raise passions, affections, &c. in us, and make us constantly proceed upon them for self-evident principles, and pursue them for ultimate *ends* of action? “ And this being so, of what unspeakable consequence are the actions of men, that thus draw after them a chain of joys or woes, as long as eternity? And how careful ought we to be to what course of life we determine ourselves, considering that our *eternal* fate depends upon what we are now doing; that every moral action we perform is a step to *heaven* or *hell-wards*; that in every bad choice we make, we are planting our *Tophet*, or our *Paradise*; and that in the consequence of our present actions we shall *reue* or *rejoice* to eternal ages? *Scott*, 2d Vol. p. 26. See also 4th Vol. Chap. 6. p. 992, &c. Fol. Edit. *Hutchinson* on the Conduct of the Passions, § 4, and 6. *Causes of the Decay of Christian Piety*, Chap. 1. or Note 81, 87, 90. and par. 14, of this section.

for ever, and become more desperate by disappointments, and to augment and multiply their misery by new attempts, which prove no less unhappy. The power of willing the state they are in is not therefore of any service to them towards the attainment of happiness, but renders them capable of eternal misery. For such elections may have the same relation to this kind of misery, as the natural appetites have to pain.

XII. Now it is sufficiently consonant to the divine goodness to permit or inflict this kind of punishment, nor would it be less subservient to the ends for which punishments are wont to be imposed, viz. that by a previous apprehension of them we may learn to be wise, and others be deterred from offending by our example. For who does not dread fury and madness as the most miserable state of mind? Who does not condemn the folly and madness of men in love, of envious and ambitious persons? Especially when he beholds them labouring thereby under innumerable evils, from which they will not be delivered?

XIII. But allowing that existence is worse than non-existence to the damned, let them imagine their misery to be greater than it really is: Let it be a part of their misery, to be conscious that they were the only cause of all their grief: yet since that could not be prevented without greater detriment to the whole, there is no room for objecting against providence which always does the best. If God had made nothing at all, and been contented to have remained alone, there would have been nothing that could sin, that could choose amiss, that could be miserable. But since it is impossible that there should be more gods, the Deity made creatures such as the nature of a created being allowed. Now

Such punishment is very great, and very well answers the end of divine punishment.

God ought to prefer the common salvation to that of particulars.

it was expedient, for the good of the whole, that some of them should have a power of bringing misery upon themselves by evil elections. Nor can any thing be charged upon the goodness of God in this, unless that he created *men*, and not *gods* equal to himself; and that he preferred the salvation of the *generality* to that of some *particulars*. He chose therefore that some should regret their having been made by God, *viz.* through the abuse of their free-will, rather than that none should be happy by using it aright.

Answer
to the
third ob-
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'Tis pro-
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XIV. As to the third objection, I believe it to be a great truth that the misery of the wicked arises from the very constitution of the sinner and that the laws of nature hold in evil elections. We see that our bodies may be maimed for ever, and our limbs dislocated and distorted to such a degree as to become totally incapable of those functions for which nature designed them. Why should we not have the same opinion of the mind, *viz.* that by depraved elections, passions, and affections, it may be so far diverted from the right way of thinking, as to become equally disabled and unfit for governing its actions according to the dictates of right reason, as a lame man is for a race? We may see every day that right notions of things are capable of being perverted by a perverse habit of thinking; and it is evident from experience that we mistake and are ignorant of useful things. We are wont to labour under prejudices, and be averse to sober counsels; in short, we are willing to endure any thing rather than alter our choice. It is a common thing for us to please ourselves in dangers, in the ruin of our fortunes, in the loss of ease, and life itself; and our volition, perverse as it is, sometimes appears more desirable than friends, kingdoms, pleasures,

fures, or even life. If therefore God does not interpose his omnipotence, the same errors, the same ignorance, the same habit of a perverted mind and obstinate propensity to evil, which here draw us aside from the right path, may continue with us for ever: nor will the soul that is immersed in this kind of evil be capable of curing itself: For one that is infected with these maladies is as unfit to help himself, as one that has cut off his hands and feet is unable to run or feed himself. (90.)

XV. Secondly, A person of this disposition of mind hates God, for he sees that he has chosen such things, in the enjoyment whereof he places his delight as cannot be consistent with the divine will. He therefore looks upon God as his enemy, and consequently avoids all commerce with him, and endeavours to abscond from him, but never thinks of changing his own will: For thro' error and ignorance he

The wicked, through ignorance and error, will delight in such things as they cannot enjoy, and may not know how to take delight in any thing else.

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(90.) This is the true meaning of that *macula peccati*, which is said to remain and set us at enmity with God, and under a natural incapacity of happiness; and which, according to some, makes it impossible for future punishments to have any other period than the total extinction or annihilation of the subjects of them; and what ground there can be to expect that may be seen from the authors referred to in note 86.

Our author, in the following paragraph, explains how this *macula* may be conceived to render God and good men our aversion; and it is easy to apprehend how utterly incapable of happiness that man must be, whose whole soul is bent another way; whose every motion, thought, and inclination; whose designs, desires, and hopes, are all fixed and rivetted to those objects which can never satisfy them; which are either quite different from, or directly contrary to the very nature and idea of true, rational happiness. A view of the consequences attending each inveterate evil habit, each ungovernable passion, or affection misapplied, will shew the absurdity of supposing any person in such a case to be happy even in heaven itself*. But this important doctrine of the force of *habits*, &c. in this world, as well as the continuance of them in the next, has been so well stated and enforced by the authors referred to above, that an attempt to give any further illustration

knows not how to take delight in any thing else. Therefore he applies all his endeavours to the attainment of such things as cannot really be attained, and strives for ever in vain with a more powerful being, *i. e.* God; nor ceases from struggling, though full of misery and despair. For though he feels himself tormented with a most exquisite pain, yet he dreads a greater from the change of his resolution: he sees misery invading him on each hand, and is forced either to oppose the Deity without any prospect of success, or to give over the contest, and lay aside all hopes of enjoying the object of his choice: He embraces the former, as the less evil of the two, and yet a greater can scarce be devised. The perverse fool may be pleased with the very contest, though it proves to no manner of purpose. In the interim God leaves such a one to himself, who by pursuing absurd and impossible things will become troublesome to himself and others, assaulting some, and being attacked by others like himself. We see in this world how much bad men delight in heaping miseries on others, and who are therefore bad men because they take delight in mischief. The servant of an absurd master is unhappy, and so is he who lives near a malevolent and morose neighbour. Suppose then the wicked who are banished from God, and odious to all good men, associating together, and it is easy to conceive what kind of society that of reprobates and devils must be; how grievous and offensive to each other. We may observe how very pernicious a wicked governor is in his province, how miserable they that are subject to such: how much more wretched must the state of the wicked be, who are subjected to, and joined with none but mad, malicious, envious and fioward beings?

XVI. It

XVI. It is to be believed that God has provided a place that is suitable and proper for them, and to which they are as much confined by the laws of their nature, as fishes to the sea, or terrestrial animals to the earth. What sort of a place that is we know not, but it is reasonable to believe that there is such a one. Men in this life choose for themselves habitations and companions according to their own genius, temper, and disposition of mind: and likeness begets love: and who can doubt but the same thing may attend the bad and good after death? The good resort therefore to the society of *God, angels, and spirits of good men*: But the wicked choose those *ghosts* which were partakers in their iniquity, and *devils* for their companions: And this may possibly be brought about by natural instinct, and mere human disposition. Nor is God wanting in goodness if he suffers them to live in their own way, and enjoy the life themselves have chosen. For this could not be prevented without doing violence to the laws of nature. And these punishments which the wicked voluntarily bring upon themselves, tend to the benefit of the universal system of rational beings.

XVII. So much for *moral evils, laws, rewards and punishments*. In which some things may appear too subtle for common apprehension; but we ought to remember that the dispute is concerning one of the nicest things in nature, *viz.* the operations of our own mind: and whatever is said in order to explain these, must necessarily be subtle. On this account the art of *logic* is called subtle, because it has these for its object, and any thing that is more subtle than ordinary is reckoned logical. He that does not like any thing that is subtle therefore ought not to dispute about what relates to our

The wicked are confined to certain places and companions by the laws of nature, as we are to the earth.

The dispute about *moral evil* relates to the mind and its operations, and on that account must necessarily be somewhat subtle.

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own minds. *Moral evil* is as it were the distemper of our minds arising from the irregular motion of the cogitative faculties: now, as 'tis difficult to discover the causes of those distempers which infect the body, so it is much more difficult to find out the causes and the motions of those maladies which afflict the mind. For it is necessary that we perfectly understand our own minds, the notions, operations, and means whereby the will is moved, and the understanding operates, before we can hope to make a full discovery of these passions of the mind, and the causes of them. And 'tis evident to any one how difficult that is: what nice abstractions, and long deduction of consequences it must require. 'Tis no wonder then if the investigation of the causes, and origin of the *evil of the mind* require some things which are too subtle for all to comprehend.

S E C T. III.

*Concerning the Question, Why bad Men are happy,
and good Men miserable.*

This question has been so well treated by many, that there is scarce any room for scruple.

I. **T**HIS question seems to have some relation to the former. For if *punishment*, that is, natural evils, be inflicted in proportion to the desert of evil elections, whence come good things to evil men, and evil to the good? 'Tis not so difficult to answer this question upon the supposition of a future state, as to make it necessary for us to insist much upon it. And it must be confessed, that it has been treated of in a very proper manner by several writers:

(91.) so

(91.) so that there's scarce any room for scruple. Nevertheless a few things shall be touched upon, and very briefly, that we may not repeat what has been said already.

II. In the first place then the matter of fact is very often doubtful, notwithstanding the complaints which many persons make to the contrary. We see indeed good men frequently miserable, but it is a query whether their good-ness may not be owing to their misery, and they would have proved wicked if they had been tempted by prosperity? It is not the good then that are afflicted, but the miserable that are reclaimed. On the other hand, we behold happy, rich, and powerful men that are wicked; but their wickedness may be attributed to their prosperity, and they would perhaps be very good if the incitements to evil were removed. 'Tis not the wicked therefore that are happy, but the happy that are corrupted with prosperity, and therefore fall into wickedness.

The matter of fact is often doubtful: for it is not good men that are miserable, but rather reformed by adversity: Nor are bad men prosperous, but made bad by prosperity.

III. Secondly, We are blinded with prejudice, and thereby rendered very *partial judges* of the goodness or badness of other men. He that is our acquaintance and befriends us is a good man, he that favours our enemies is a very bad one. Thus *Scipio* is celebrated by the Roman historians, and if any hard or unprosperous accident befall him, they begin to ask whether there be any gods? Whether Divine Providence takes care of human affairs? But *Hannibal* is condemned, his victories are charged as crimes

We are partial judges of merit: from the instance of *Hannibal* and *Scipio*.

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(91.) Viz. *Sherlock on Judgment*, Ch. 1. § 3. p. 76, &c. 1st Edit.—on *Providence*, Ch. 7. p. 258. 2d Edit. *Cadworth*, p. 877. *Cockburn*, Essay 5. prop. 7, 8. p. 137, &c. *Wollaston*, p. 71, and 110, &c. *Cradlock* on *Ecc.* ix. 2. *Seneca*, Ep. 24. *Fiddes's Sermons*, Fol. 14 and 19. *Scott*, 2d vol. Ch. 4. § 3. p. 331, &c. 8vo. and Discourse 16. p. 320, &c. 2d vol. Fol. *Sillingfleet*, *Origines Sacrae*, B. 3. Ch. 2. § 21. p. 326, &c. Fol. *Grew*, *Cosmologia Sacra*, B. 3. Ch. 2. § 57, 58. But with the greatest accuracy by *Foster*, Discourses, Vol. 1. 4to.

on Providence, and they repine at his having been so long successful. Whereas 'tis really dubious whether of the two was the worse man; both certainly were very bad: For their aim was to put the world into confusion, to subdue nations by force of arms, the one intending to make *Carthage*, the other *Rome*, the head of the world, by slaughter, rapine, war, and injustice. Now the man that studies to oppress the whole world in servitude, and bring it under the power of that nation to which he belongs, this man is truly wicked and unworthy of success, however he may veil his ambition, pride, and fury in some particular instances, under the specious pretence of clemency and love of his country,

We are bad judges of the happiness of men: for those are often the most miserable whom we esteem happy, and the contrary.

The chief happiness here consists in hope; which is a sign that perfect happiness is reserved for another life, and all these things which befall good or bad men, are means to it.

IV. Thirdly, As we are partial judges of the *deserts* of other men, so are we no less unqualified to pronounce on their *felicity*. For we are taken with the pomp, and noise, and glittering outside of things, and consequently judge the rich, the potent, the noble, and the learned, to be happy; but the poor, ignoble and unlettered, miserable. And yet herein we are very frequently mistaken, since neither of them are what they appear to be. For life is often attended with more happiness among cottages, husbandry, and trade, nay in the midst of bodily pains and diseases; than among scepters, diadems, high pedigrees, and superfluous heaps of books; since, as we have shewn before, and experience testifies, happiness lies chiefly, if not solely, in election.

V. Fourthly, It is to be observed, that the greatest part of the happiness of this life consists in *hope*, and that the fruition of the desired object is not answerable to the hope pre-conceived, which must be esteemed an indication that complete happiness is reserved by nature for another life; the more then we aspire after, and adhere

adhere to the present objects, the less care we shall take of those things which tend to our future happiness. It was therefore wisely provided by God, that the good should not be corrupted with too plentiful an enjoyment of the things of this world, but that the bad should have them in abundance: For by this means all may understand that their time ought not to be spent in these things, but that the space of this short life should be employed in looking after other matters, *i. e.* such as regard eternity.

To conclude, we must affirm that nothing happens to good men which may not prove a means of greater good; nor to the bad, which may not be for their punishment or reformation.

VI. And I hope it appears from what has been said, that the objections of the *Manicheans* and *Paulicians* are not so formidable as they have seemed to some; and that human reason is not so blind but that it can solve these difficulties from the principles laid down, and such suppositions as are generally admitted; and though not absolutely certain, yet probable however, and such as we use to acquiesce in, for the solution of other phenomena.

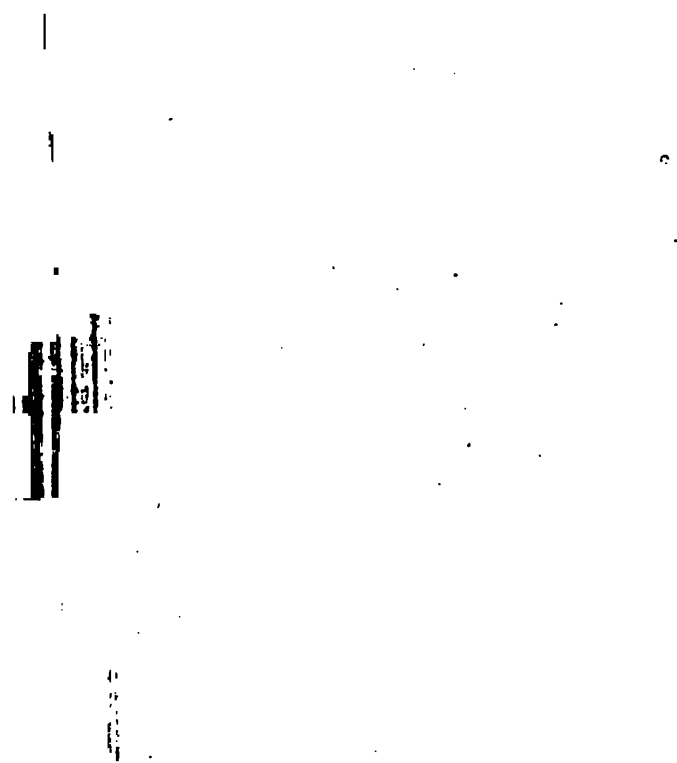
Conclusion
of the
whole.

F I N I S.

A
S E R M O N
ON THE
F A L L O F M A N.

BY
WILLIAM Lord Archbishop of DUBLIN.

THE FOURTH EDITION.



O N T H E F A L L o f M A N.

GEN. II. Ver. 16, 17.

And the Lord God commanded the Man, saying, Of every Tree of the Garden thou mayst freely eat.

But of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil thou shalt not eat of it: For in the Day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.

DAILY experience shews us that there is much ignorance, folly and misery amongst men; that we have a prospect of these as soon as we begin to think; and that nothing more imbitters life than that view. The beasts are sick, and want and die as well as men; but yet are not so miserable, because they see no farther than the present, and therefore are not tormented with the remembrance of what is past, or the fear of what is to come. Whereas men are apprized that pains and diseases, disappointments and death are before them, and have not the like certainty of one single act of pleasure to balance the dismal consideration. This should make us sensible that we are not in the state in which nature placed us, since a good God can hardly be supposed to have made a creature with less views of happiness than of misery. From whence we may conclude, that our present estate is not that wherein God created us, but that we are some way or other fallen from it. The text gives us the occasion of that fall, and there is no other account to be given of our present condition, but what we receive here from the holy scriptures: for although all considering men have seen and bemoaned our misery, yet none could ever discover any other rational ground for it, or give any tolerable reason how it came to be so.

It is surely of great moment to us to be acquainted with it, because it is one step to the cure to discover the disease. It is a subject not commonly handled, and requires

attention in you, as well as diligence and care in me to inform you in the following particulars.

1st. Of the state or circumstances of man, when this command in the text was given.

2dly. The command itself forbidding *Adam* to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

3dly. How man was seduced to break this command.

4thly. The consequences of this disobedience.

As to the state and circumstances of man when this command was given.

1st. It is manifest, that he was then immediately created, and being just come out of the hands of God, he was in a state proper to his nature, pure and innocent, without any stain or corruption. He had no law but that of his mind, or what he received by immediate revelation from God; nor any defect, but that which is unavoidably incident to every thing created, which may be perfect in its kind, but cannot be absolutely so; that being proper to God. For to say a thing was created, is to confess that it depends on the will and power of him that made it; and therefore it cannot be self-sufficient, but needs the continual support of its Creator, and the assistance of such of its fellow-creatures as God has been pleased to appoint as necessary helpers for its subsistence. All the perfection therefore to which creatures can pretend, is to answer the design for which they were created. This is that goodness God saw in them. This undoubtedly man had, and in this sense he was *very good*. If therefore God did not design that man should be self-sufficient, but have a communion with the bodies that are about him, and as a portion of the universe depend on their assistance and influence as to his material part; it will be no imperfection in him that he owes his food to the earth, his warmth to the sun, and his breath to the air. For since God has made all these necessary to his subsistence, he answers the design of providence, whilst he uses them to the purposes, to which God has appointed them.

2dly. We must remember that if man's understanding at first was never so clear, and his senses and faculties never

so strong; yet having made no observations, and being absolutely without experience, he could know no more of any thing, than what was revealed by God to him. And there was no necessity that God should reveal more knowledge to him than was at present to be used by him. You may observe in the 19th verse of this chapter, that *out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them to Adam, to see what he would call them, and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.* This was the way by which God taught him language; and you see it went no farther than the names of the beasts of the earth, and fowls of the air amongst whom he lived, and over whom he was to exercise dominion.

Nor was it any imperfection in the first man, that he was ignorant of the nature of things, if we suppose that he had a certain way to come to that knowledge, when he had occasion for it. For the design of knowledge is not to amuse us or fill our heads with notions, but to serve and direct us in the affairs of life. It is only this sort of knowledge that is truly valuable: and he that has most of it and best applies it, is to be accounted most wise. If therefore *Adam* had a certain way of knowing the nature of every thing, when he was to employ that knowledge; though he was actually without it, yet he was in a better state than any of his posterity, who have made many observations, and are furnished with many actual notions, but have no certain way of coming to such knowledge as upon every occasion is necessary for their direction.

3dly. Therefore we must conceive that *Adam* was under the immediate conduct and direction of God, and was not to judge for himself, but was to leave himself entirely to be guided and directed by his Maker. You see he was not left to determine for himself what he should eat: But God by revelation assigned him his food, and provided it for him. So chap. i. ver. 29. *And God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth: and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, to you it shall be for meat.* And in the text,
of

of every tree in the garden thou mayst freely eat. This seems added, because these trees of paradise were not planted when God made the revelation of the first chapter: and therefore it might be doubted whether they were intended for the food of man, or given him by the former revelation, if God had not expressly declared it.

Now if man was not to feed himself before he had God's direction for it, which saved him the trouble and hazard of finding out by trials what was fit for him; it is reasonable to believe, that in every affair of life he was to depend on the same direction; that he was not to assume to himself that knowledge of good and evil, that is, of what was profitable or hurtful to him, but entirely to depend on God for the determination thereof, and whilst he did so, he could never know evil, because God would always direct him to what was good, and to that only.

It is to be considered that man by his constitution was mortal, and subject to the impressions of the bodies that surrounded him; for being composed of the elements as to his material part, in which he resembled other living creatures, those might be separated and dissolved, and the separation of the parts of our body infers death. And therefore man in his natural composition was subject to it; but yet was capable of immortality, to which he could not be intitled but from a supernatural principle, and the peculiar care of God. For it was impossible that man's understanding, how great soever, should be so perfect as to enable him of himself to know and avoid all those things that might occasion a decay and dissolution of his body. Only God's knowledge could reach this, and therefore it is manifest he must depend on that, and on all occasions have recourse to it, if he expected to continue immortal.

Nor 4thly, Was his being obliged to such dependance to be looked on as a defect, but rather a most signal favour. I observed before, that he depended on the air for breath, on the sun for warmth, and on the earth for food; and yet none of these could be reckoned an imperfection; how much less could his dependance on his
 Creator

Creator for the inlightning and informing his understanding for the discovery of what was good and evil, either in his moral or natural actions, be looked upon as derogatory to his nature. On the contrary, nothing could be a greater honour to him, than that God should vouchsafe to become his guide; nothing could be a greater security or advantage. This must and only could take away all doubt and solicitousness out of his mind, and render him perfectly easy and secure. By this he had the benefit of all knowledge, and was freed from the trouble of acquiring it.

It is true, that we have now an unmeasurable thirst of improving our understanding, and penetrating into the nature of things; we reckon a great part of our happiness to consist in it, and value ourselves on it; but we are not to imagine that it was so from the beginning. The reason of our eagerness for knowledge now arises from our depending on our own conduct. Hence on all occasions we find great use for it, and having nothing else to trust to, that can lead us through the difficulties of life, we endeavour to know as much as we can, and are glad when we can attain to any new notion; because we find ourselves often at a loss, and cannot tell how soon it may be useful to us. But whilst man was not to judge for himself, whilst he depended on the omniscience of God to direct him, he had no such occasion for knowing the nature of things, nor need be much concerned about them. For to what purpose should *Adam* have desired to acquire knowledge, when he could have recourse to the infinite wisdom of God on all occasions to inform and guide him? Whilst children are supplied by their parents, can call for any thing they want, they are little covetous of money, and can hardly be prevailed with to apply their heads to the methods of acquiring it; nor are they fond of it when they have it: but a stock being once put into their hands, and they finding that they must want, if they do not provide and manage industriously, they do by degrees grow thirsty of gain and parsimonious; lay projects, and eagerly pursue the means of enriching themselves. We may conceive it

was thus with man in his innocency; and that he was little solicitous about acquiring knowledge, whilst he could recur to the inexhaustible stock of God his parent, and be supplied by a free communication from thence on all occasions. But when by sin he cut himself off from that, and became his own master to judge what was good and evil for himself, he then found himself under continual doubts and difficulties; he is become sensible of his ignorance and disability how to determine in the affairs of life, and has no other assistance than his own understanding: this makes him diligent to improve it, and as covetous of knowledge as of money; and so searches for the treasure of the one with as much industry and pains as of the other. Whereas whilst he depended on God only for his direction, he was freed from all that labour, thirst and anxiety wherewith he now prosecutes knowledge, and was content with the inexhaustible treasure of divine wisdom, to which he had an easy and ready access on all occasions: and till we have the like again, we can never be happy or secure. God is the father of spirits, and as a father he is ready to make provision for them, if they will have recourse to him, and depend on him. He is the light of souls, and has the same proportion to them, that the sun and his beams have to the eye. Whilst we have the use of these, we know our way and can see about us; but when these are absent, we are forced to use artificial lights that can never perfectly supply the want of them. All our acquired knowledge is but like these artificial lights that can never supply the communication of wisdom, which God was pleased to impart to our first parents in that state of innocency, and of which he deprived them for their sin. This I suppose may be sufficient to teach us the condition and circumstances of man, when that command in the text was given him.

As to the command itself, which was the 2d head of my discourse, *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*; we are to consider, 1st. the tree here mentioned.

2dly.

2dly. The congruity of God's applying it to the present use, and

3dly. The reasonableness of God's making it an instance of our obedience,

Concerning the tree of knowledge of good and evil here mentioned, let us observe 1st. that it was a true literal tree, and that we are not to be put off with a meer figure. For it is said, ver. 9. of the chapter: *And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.* If the trees for sight and food were true literal trees, then so likewise were the trees of life and knowledge, for both are equally said to grow out of the ground. And when God in the text allows man to eat of the other trees, he forbids him on pain of death to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now to understand *eating* and *trees* literally in one part of the text, and figuratively in the other, when there is no intimation or ground for a different sense, is incongruous to reason. No! it will be plain to any one that considers the design of *Moses*, that he is giving us here the literal history of the creation of the world, of the making and fall of man, and not an *allegory*. But because this does not suit with the notions of some men, to whom the scripture in the literal sense seems not sufficiently spiritual, therefore they endeavour to allegorize the history of man's fall, but might with equal reason turn his creation and that of the world into a figure. And it is observable, that the same persons that put a figurative sense on the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and on the manner of man's becoming liable to death, as the scriptures deliver it; do the same with the methods God has appointed for our recovery, and deny not only the literal sacraments, but likewise the resurrection of the same body, the power of the literal death of Christ and the satisfaction purchased by it. But we must not separate the literal from the mystical sense; as we must not deny the baptism of water, because we acknowledge that of the Spirit, nor the resurrection of our bodies because we own another of
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our souls; so neither must we deny a literal tree of knowledge because it had a mystical sense and importance.

And this brings me to the second thing concerning this tree, the congruity of God's applying it to the use mentioned in the text: For the understanding of which we must remember, that God in all his intercourses with men, has constantly made use of some visible or outward means; and that it is reasonable it should be so. For since man has a body as well as a soul; senses as well as understanding; and that the soul does make use of the organs of the body and of the senses for its information; and that this is the natural course of our acquiring knowledge; it were a violence to the nature of man to invert the method, or separate the one from the other. And therefore God in his communications with us seems industriously to have avoided it; especially where the joining them together may contribute to the certainty and effectualness of the revelation, and to secure us from being imposed on by pretenders. Whenever therefore God has shewed any miracle, he has made use of some outward action to prepare the minds of men for it, and ascertain them of his presence. Thus *Moses* did all his miracles with his rod. Thus *Elisha* ordered *Naaman* to wash seven times in the river *Jordan* to cure his leprosy. And although God industriously avoided assuming any shape, when he gave the law; yet he assured the people of *Israel* that he was present by thunder, smoke and fire at mount *Sinai*, and by a burning bush at his first appearance to *Moses*. Nor did our Saviour go about the public execution of his office, 'till anointed by the *Spirit*, and visibly commissioned to it by the *Holy Ghost* descending on him in a bodily shape: And thus he still communicates to us the principles of our new birth by water, and his body and blood by bread and wine. Now this being the manner of God's entertaining an intercourse with man through the whole scripture, it is very evident that the two remarkable trees of paradise, that of life, and this of the knowledge of good and evil, were designed for these mystical purposes, and intended as settled and visible means to supply man with
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God's influence and assistance in those cases in which he could want them.

For 1st. Man might be at a loss how to preserve his body from decays, to which (as was observed before) it was naturally subject. And 2dly, how to direct his actions. For the first of these God appointed the tree of life. Not that any tree by any natural virtue could preserve us immortal: but since God commanded man to eat of it as often as he needed to be restored in his body, he surely was ready and able to convey his supernatural assistance to him by it, and make it effectual to the design for which it was appointed. Man's eating therefore of it with faith and in obedience to God, was the signal upon which the Divine Power was pleased to exert itself for the restoration of him to his primitive vigour. And there is no more difficulty to conceive how this should be done, than how the *Israelites* in the wilderness should be cured of the bitings of the venomous creatures by looking on the brazen serpent. Every faithful Christian expects God should answer his prayers, and grant him some things, which he could not have without asking; and if God exert his power on our speaking a word, or offering a desire, which have no natural virtue to procure the effect; he may do the same upon our giving a signal by some action appointed by him to this purpose. If he gives his *Holy Spirit* to them that ask it according to his promise, why not to those likewise who in obedience to his command are baptized in his name? And if he give life and immortality now to those that believe and are baptized, why might he not give and preserve life by means of that tree, to the use of which he had promised it, when they in faith should eat of it? Now that life was annexed to the use of that tree is plain from Chap. iii. ver. 22. *And now lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden.* This shews, that the restoring of strength and preservation of life was annexed to that tree by an irrevocable decree: for the words plainly intimate, that if man after his fall, could have continued the use of it, he had been immortal,

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And as God provided for the preservation of his body by the tree of life, so he likewise provided for his soul, and taught him how to govern it by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil : and this he was not to eat, nor to touch it. By which was signified unto him, that he was not to pretend or any way to judge what was good or evil for him : but on all occasions to have recourse to God, and entirely to resign and trust himself to the divine conduct. That as it was by the declaration of God certain death to eat of this tree on account of its being a symbol of the immediate dependance on his Maker, for the distinguishing of what was good and evil for him ; so he was not to trust to his own understanding for the determining of these, but to have recourse to God without further concerning himself about them.

And this sufficiently shews how congruous it was for God to make use of this tree for this purpose, and is a step to discover to us the reasonableness of God's making man's abstinence from it an instance of obedience ; which was the 3d thing to be shewed concerning it.

For the understanding of which, you must observe, 1st. That the whole duty of man lay in obedience to this command, as the whole means of immortality was in eating of the tree of life. Whilst man refrained from eating of this tree, he could have no other temptation, he could neither feel nor know any evil, for he was under the immediate care and protection of God ; and those were sufficient to preserve him from all hurt or mischief ; which his own understanding could never do. Man's whole duty therefore and safety, were comprehended in this one command : and as the use of the tree of life was an infallible and the only means of preserving his body, so the eating of this, and thereby violating the divine command, was the only way to hurt his soul. This was the only door by which evil could come in upon him, and if he had kept that shut, it could never have entered.

2dly. We must consider that man was fallible in his understanding, peccable in his will, and mortal in his body ; and therefore the preserving him from deceit, sin and death, must be due to some supernatural grace of God ;
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and that in order to confer that grace there ought to be some obvious means, easy to be known and ready to be used. And perhaps it will be hard to think of any other way so suitable as this which God chose. For if some outward means ought to be used, this restraining him from the use of one of the trees seems the most proper: some such symbol seems not only reasonable but necessary; and food being the only thing he needed, and that provided for him out of the fruits of the earth, the instance could not be so proper in any other matter.

3dly, We must remember that man was created a free agent, and it is the nature of such to be pleased with nothing that is not agreeable to their choice. The best and most pleasing thing in the world if it be forced on us against our choice, is uneasy to us. There must be something of choice in what makes us happy; and could there be a more easy thing to be left to that, than not to eat of one tree where there were so many? We may imagine that God in effect said to man, Your nature requires that you should choose those things the enjoyment whereof will make you happy. I will make your duty easy unto you; abstain from this one tree, and whilst you do so, I will take care that you shall not choose amiss in any thing else. Your obedience in this shall be an infallible means to secure you from choosing wrong in any other thing. Whilst you use your free-will right in this, I will take care that you shall not abuse it on any other occasion. Some instance of your free obedience is necessary: And this is the most easy that could be provided for you. But by your wrong use of free-will here, you will open a gate for sin and death to enter.

Surely this account makes this command very reasonable, very agreeable for God to give, and man to receive. And from this it appears, that it was not given merely as an arbitrary trial of submission to the will of God, but rather as a means to facilitate and secure the obedience we owe him. When *Christ* sent the blind man to the waters of *Siloam* for opening his eyes, nobody will say that that command was a mere trial of his obedience, but rather a means to restore his sight. And so when God commanded man here not to eat of the *tree of knowledge*, &c. that abstinence

nence was not imposed upon him so much by the way of trial, as to be a means to assure him of the grace and assistance of God. This gave him an interest in his own happiness, because it made it in some measure depend on his free-will, without which it could not have been happiness, as has been shewed before; and yet it made it so easy to him, that nothing but the goodness of God could have found out so very sensible and so effectual a means. Thus you see a fair meaning and reason of this command, and that there is no necessity of forsaking the letter of scripture to justify God's imposing it.

Let us now in the 3d place consider by what means man was seduced to break this command. Of this we have an account, Ch. iii. When God asks the question of the woman, she answers, ver. 13. *The serpent beguiled me and I did eat.* Now it will be necessary, 1st, to consider the seducer, and 2dly, the argument by which he prevailed on her. As to the seducer, 'twas a serpent, Ch. iii. ver. 1. *Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made; and he said unto the woman, yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?* From which you are to observe, 1st, that this was a literal serpent; the same serpent that is now cursed, and goes on his belly, and eats dust; that is hated and abhorred by man, that is so poisonous and pernicious to him, between whom and man there is a natural enmity to this day, is literally meant in this place, and is not to be allegorized away, as some would have it.

2dly. The serpent was then the most subtle and cunning of beasts, we must not understand this of him, as now stupified by the curse of God, but as created at first in perfection. The tradition of whose cunning was so constant and universal, that it became proverbial among all the antients, with whom to be as wise as serpents (meaning the first of the kind) denotes the perfection of subtlety; which shews a general belief, that he had at first a sagacity more than ordinary.

3dly. We are not to wonder that *Eve* was not surprized or frightened at the serpent's speaking to her; for as I observed before, she had yet no experience of things, was ignorant

norant of the nature of beasts, and for aught she knew, all of them might speak as well as *Adam* did. This ignorance could be no hurt to her, for if she had desired to know, she had no more to do but to apply herself to God, who was her immediate director, and would have discovered it to her, if she had asked it; and we are not to doubt, but it was as easy for her to have had recourse to him, as it is for us to open our eyes in order to see; and therefore she was as inexcusable as a man would be, that should fall into a pit because he would not look before him.

But 4thly. Tho' this was a true literal serpent, yet there was more in it, the devil made use of it to compass his ends: And he was the person that spake through it. This, as I take it, is confessed by all; for no brute could ever reason or speak of itself: And it ought to be observed, that when the worship of the devil was settled in the world, a serpent was the sign and symbol of whatever was sacred to him; he was worshipped under that form, and seemed to take a peculiar pleasure to appear and receive homage in that shape in which he deceived man. Add to this, that a serpent was the beast by which he vented his oracles in many places, and the very word by which his divinations are signified in several languages is taken from this animal; as if the devil were still acting his deceits in the serpent.

As to the argument that he used to seduce our first parents, we shall find it a very plausible one. 'Tis in Chap. iii. ver. 4. *And the servant said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil.* The meaning of this seems to be as if he had said, God doth but mock you, when he threatens you with death; this is not the reason why he forbids you the use of this tree: the true design is to keep you in ignorance, to blindfold you, and hinder you from judging for yourselves by your own eyes and reason. By this means you are kept altogether in a dependance on him, and obliged in all cases to have recourse to him, and not suffered to enquire by the strength of your own faculties, what may hurt or help you. You have not the use of the senses and under-

standing you possess by nature, but are kept in a blind unreasonable subjection to his will. But he knows if you eat of this tree, you shall be freed from this pupilage of slavery. That you will of yourselves, as well as he, understand what is good or evil for you, and so need not be beholden to him: He judges what is good for himself, and that privilege makes him God: and therefore you may be sure it is a pleasant thing to do so. And for this reason he keeps it to himself, and will not allow it you. But if you will venture and eat, you will then be like him, and be competent judges of your own advantage, as well as he is. Thus our first parent was prevailed on to suspect God, and make a trial by disobedience whether her own eyes and understanding might not be sufficient to direct her. Nor is it any wonder she was deceived, if we consider her want of experience and innocent simplicity. Not that she was excusable, since she had no more to take care of but this one thing, and she ought to have had recourse to God or her husband before she made the experiment. But the argument was so framed as to prevent that recourse, and therefore it only was capable to deceive her. The serpent suggested to her, that God imposed on her, and therefore it seemed improper to consult with him, when she desired to discover whether it was so or no. This is so powerful a method of deceiving, that it is observable it seldom fails to be effectual, and that an argument almost like this corrupts the generality of mankind. Either ill company or our own heads suggest to us, when we are children and ignorant of our interest, that our parents, guardians and tutors debar us of the pleasures of life, out of envy. We argue with ourselves and one another, that these old fellows keep us to our books and to our work, debar us of our pleasures and recreations, bring us under rules, and admonish us to be aware of lust, and excesses, that they may engross those to themselves and keep us in a dependance on them; that therefore they will not suffer us to try these enjoyments, and that the design of all is to make us slaves. Whereas we are apt to think, that we have understanding enough to manage ourselves, and therefore why may we not be left to be our own guides and to choose for ourselves? Hence we

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conclude, let us make the experiment, and throw off the restraints our conductors would put on us. And thus thousands have been and daily are deceived. And few young people are able to resist the force of this temptation; which shews the power of it: especially when it comes as it did on *Eve*, cloathed with all outward advantage of allurements, as in the 6th verse. *The tree was good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise.* So wise, that they needed no more to consult God to teach them what was good or evil for them. These were charms she could not easily resist; by these she was then seduced, and deceived her husband, and by the like temptations her posterity daily fall. Whoever knows the humour of youth, and how it was with himself when young, doth also know that this curiosity of trying the pleasures of sense, this itch of being our own masters and choosing for ourselves, together with the charming face of sins, and our ignorance and inexperience of the consequences of them, are generally the first means of our being corrupted, against the good maxims and principles we receive from our parents and teachers: as the fairness of the fruit, the seeming properness of it for food, and the desire of being judge for herself of what might be good and evil, of being under her own management and government, were the inducements that prevailed with our first parent to throw off the conduct of God.

There remains now the 4th and last part of what I proposed, the consequences of this disobedience. They are so dismal and numerous, that I can only hint at some of the principal of them. The first of them was the opening these sinners eyes, ch. iii. 7. *And the eyes of them both were opened.* A man's eyes are said to be opened, when he perceives or discovers something relating to his state and condition which he did not observe before. Now before this transgression, man had not discovered any want or defect in himself: He was directed by the wisdom of God, and supplied by his all-sufficiency, and therefore wanted nothing for his conduct and support. But when he put himself out of the divine protection, and was to manage and support himself, he soon saw and felt his imperfections and

wants. Whilst young children are under their parents government and care, they are solicitous about nothing; they are not concerned about their meat, drink and safety, any farther than to call to their parents for them when they want them: nor are they afraid while they are near them: but if they should withdraw themselves, and leave their children in the dark, or in a wilderness, their eyes would soon be opened; they would soon see and feel their impotence to help and defend themselves; concern and terror would seize them, and take away the use of the little reason they have. We may imagine this to be the condition of our first parents, when God withdrew his influence and protection from them upon their deserting him. Their eyes were opened as soon as they were left to themselves. They found their necessities and wants. They found the shortness of their own power to help them, and insufficiency of their own understanding to direct them. They found themselves incompetent judges of what was good or evil for them, and they then in earnest, to their cost, *knew evil*, that is, felt it. This was a natural consequence of their setting up to be their own masters, and to judge for themselves: no finite understanding being sufficient to foresee or know, what in the infinite variety of our circumstances may hurt us; and tho' it did foresee them, yet nothing less than an Almighty Power is able to prevent the mischief. The opening therefore of our first parents eyes to see their impendent miseries, and their impotency to help themselves, was the first effect of their sin.

The 2d was their sense of their being naked, and shame that they were so. Shame proceeds from a consciousness of weakness, or of guilt, and from a secret pride that makes us unwilling to own it, lest we should be despised for it. Man could not be conscious of either before his fall, because he was innocent from guilt, and was covered by the power of God against all the defects of his natural weakness; but being now left to himself, he felt both. He had offended God, and had no defence against his fellow-creatures: the sun scorched him, the rain wet him, and the cold pierced him. He found an inconveniency in exposing his body, and was ashamed of the effects of it.

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He found himself moved with lust and other irregular passions, and his reason unable to curb them. Whereas the power of God, whilst he was under the divine government, had kept all his faculties in perfect order. He saw therefore now great hurt in nakedness, which no way incommoded him whilst covered in innocency.

The 3d effect of this transgression of our first parents was aversion to God. ch. iii. 8. *And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden: ver. 10. I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.* This was a very natural effect; for since they were concerned to see their nakedness, since they were ashamed of it, and it now displeased their eyes, they could not think it could be pleasing to God. There was a visible presence of God in *Eden*, and man no doubt was taught to come before him with decency and reverence: and being now blotted and stained with sin in his soul, and naked in his body, he must needs be afraid to appear in such circumstances before his Maker. When he was ashamed to see himself, he might well be afraid to be seen of God. A child that has dirtied and hurt himself in disobeying his parent's command, will naturally fly his presence. Thus it fared with man in Paradise, and thus it continues with us his posterity to this day. We are afraid of that commerce, and flee that communion with God that was the great comfort and security of man in his innocency.

The 4th consequence of man's transgressions, was God's pronouncing sentence on each of the transgressors; on the serpent, on the woman, and lastly on *Adam*.

First on the Serpent, *And the Lord God said unto the serpent, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life; and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* To be cursed is to become abominable and miserable; to be designed and devoted to destruction; to be under the displeasure of God and the execration of men. The serpent carries still the marks of this curse, and is forced to cover and hide its head on all occasions, as being offensive to the

eye, and obnoxious to the revenge of any that can surprise it. We kill other creatures for food or diversion, but serpents are declared enemies; we equally hate and fear them, and therefore destroy them with pleasure and eagerness.

The 2d part of the serpent's punishment is to go on his belly, and feed on dust. How he was framed at first we know not, but see now that he crawls on the ground, and cannot lift up his head. This was a just punishment for his high attempt in opposing himself to God, and teaching man to question the goodness and veracity of his Maker. As to his food which God has here decreed to be dust, it was very congruous that the serpent who had tempted our first parents by the loveliness of the fruit of the tree of good and evil, should be condemned to the vilest of meat, and be obliged to feed on filth and dirt; that his fault might in some measure be seen in his punishment.

The 3d part of the sentence passed on the serpent, is enmity between him and man his Lord, which continues to this day, their very natures being contrary and destructive to one another. There is a perpetual war between them, and though he sometimes hurts or wounds his master by surprise in his more ignoble parts; yet he has the worst of it: for man bruises his head and effectually destroys him. All this is literally true, and without an allegory. But if it be enquired why the serpent was thus sentenced, when he committed no fault, but was acted by the devil? It must be answered, that he was the only visible tempter that appeared to man, and therefore the punishment was first to fall on him, for example sake, and to beget in us an abhorrence of the guilt. The serpent of himself was no more capable of being punished than of sinning; but these marks of God's displeasure were left on him for our sake, that we might have a visible remembrancer of what sin deserves. If the instruments of the temptation were thus used, we may be sure the principal actor did not escape the vengeance of God.

But 2dly. If we suppose the devil possessed the serpent, and was as it were incarnate in it; we may have leave to think that the power of God could unite them as closely as
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our souls and bodies are joined, and cause the punishment inflicted on the literal serpent to affect satan in it, as well as the injuries done our bodies do reach our souls; at least while that very serpent was in being.

3dly. Inasmuch as the literal sense does not exclude the mystical, the cursing of the serpent is a symbol to us, and a visible pledge of the malediction with which the devil is struck by God, and whereby he is become the most abominable and miserable of creatures. The serpent's being confined to go on his belly, points out to us the wretchedness of that condition to which the devil is reduced: his eating dust, the blasting of all his enjoyments, and debarring him from all those pleasures that flow from the right hand of God; being thrown below the feet of all other creatures, to be trampled by them; that is to be confined to the lowest, vilest, and most miserable, as well as most contemptible estate. As to the serpent's enmity with man, it needs no great pains to apply it to the devil. It is plain he is continually laying snares for us; he lies in ambush and surprises us; he wounds us in our passions and lower faculties, and by these sometimes reaches our souls: though that can never be, if we don't consent to it, and by that make it our own act. But man by the help of the *Seed of the woman*, that is by our Saviour, shall bruise his head, wound him in the place that is most mortal, and finally confound and destroy him with eternal ruin. In the mean time, the enmity and abhorrence we have of the serpent, is a continual warning to us of the danger we are in from the devil, and how heartily we ought to hate and abhor him and all his works.

2dly. As to the woman, her punishment consists of two parts, 1st, in the pains of child-bearing, ver. 16 .of ch.iii. *And to the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception. In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children.* This was a very just and proper punishment. She had brought sorrow and death on all her posterity, and in bringing them forth it was but reasonable she should suffer something of what they were to suffer all their lives: And it is continued on all those that descend from her, as an item and memorandum of the mischief brought on mankind

kind by sin. By this she and her descendants may learn, how much God abhors disobedience, and it is a pledge to them of God's anger against the guilty.

The 2d part of her punishment is in these words in the same verse, *Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.* This too was a most reasonable sentence, and proportionable to her sin. Her offence was an attempt to be a judge of good and evil for herself, to be her own mistress, and depend no more on God for her government. Instead of attaining her design, God makes her subject to her husband; places those desires and inclinations on him which she had withdrawn from God, and constitutes him her ruler and head. By this she and her whole sex became subjects, and dependent on the froward will of those husbands she had corrupted; being obliged to endure not only the miseries of her own choice, but likewise a share in those of her husband's. This is a demonstration to us of the folly of an attempt to judge of good and evil for ourselves, and the great abhorrence God has of sin; since he avenges it not only on the person immediately guilty, but extends the punishment to the whole sex.

As to the man, his punishment consists in the following particulars, 1st, ver. 17. *Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; Cursed is the ground for thy sake. In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.* This punishment is rightly adapted to man's sin. He would not be content with the meat God had provided for him, which the earth of itself furnished him by God's appointment, therefore God decreed that it should do so no more, but man should be put to force his food out of it, and provide for himself with labour and toil, with the sweat of his brows and the anguish of his heart. By this we may understand how much better it had been to have left the provision of sustenance for us to God, and to depend on him for it, as well as for the government of our actions. Since we would not do the latter, God has refused to do the former for us.

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The 2d part of God's sentence against man, is the condemnation of him to temporal death, ver. 19. of ch. iii. *For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.* It was observed before, that man by his natural constitution was mortal, and that it was only by the especial favour of God, that he was preserved from death. Since therefore he had forfeited that favour, he must of course sink into his native mortality. It was not necessary that God should alter his nature or constitution to make him mortal, there needed no more but taking away the means of immortality, the use of the tree of life, to subject him to death; and the use of it was no ways due to his nature: God therefore did him no injustice, by depriving him and his posterity of paradise and the use of the tree of life, these being matters of favour; and we intitled to them only on this condition, that our first parents should continue in obedience to God. This withdrawing of God's favour is a great and dreadful punishment, but far from injustice, because it takes nothing from us that was due to our nature, and leaves us still in a condition preferable to not being at all, which is as much as God in strictness of justice is obliged to do for any creature. Thus we find ourselves subjected to the displeasure and wrath of God by our descent from *Adam*, so far as to prevail with God to withdraw from us his peculiar favours that he designed for us; if our first parents had continued in their obedience, the consequence of which is that we become subject to pains and miseries, to sickness and temporal death.

But 2dly. The souls of men are immortal, and capable of misery or happiness after this life, and the transgression of *Adam* does likewise affect them, and they become liable to damnation on account thereof. It seems indeed hard, that God's anger should reach so far as to deprive all mankind of eternal happiness for the sin of one; but if we consider man as a free agent, we shall find that eternal happiness is not absolutely due to him, but only the possibility thereof: and if God has not deprived us of that possibility, he has done us no injustice. And it appears from the very history of man's fall, that God has not done that: for he has entered into new terms of sal-

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vation with us, and has intimated them, though obscurely, in ch. iii. ver. 15. when he declares that *the Seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent*. Signifying thereby, that mankind should not despair. For notwithstanding the devil had got an advantage over them, yet by the means of Christ they should finally conquer and vanquish him. And the world was so far possessed with the belief of the possibility of a reconciliation with God, that they still applied to him with prayers and sacrifices; and he gave them sufficient proof, that his mercy towards them was not quite extinct, and that he still continued his goodness to the wicked posterity of wicked parents. Hence St. Paul observes, *Acts xiv. 16. That though God in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, yet he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.*

But 3dly. We may conceive a double happiness, first, that which is absolute and perfect, according to the utmost capacity of the creature that enjoys it. 2dly. That which is better than not to be, but yet is mixed with sufferings, and may come as much short of perfect blessedness, as our present state is distant from perfect ease and pleasure. The latter of these is due in justice to every being that God has made, if they have not forfeited their title by sin. But the first of these is a favour that God may bestow on whom he pleases, or withhold from them upon other considerations besides guilt. The sin of our first parents is such a motive, as has induced God to deny it to all the posterity of *Adam*, however actually innocent. And this is a great indication of his displeasure toward them. Upon this account, the most innocent children are eternally banished heaven, and deprived of the presence of God; which may justly be reckoned an eternal spiritual death, when compared with the pleasures and happiness that otherwise they would have enjoyed. For though we cannot say of them, that it had been better for them never to have been, yet their life may truly be reckoned a hell, comparatively to what they might have expected if their first parents had not offended,

fended, and brought this punishment upon their descendants. Though this may seem to be very hard on infants that never actually sinned, yet it cannot be called unjust, because they are not deprived of any thing that was absolutely due to their nature, but only of those favours that God might have denied them on other considerations besides that of their personal guilt. Neither does this infer any third state for souls after death, but only a difference among such as are condemned to hell. There is such a difference acknowledged in the state of the blessed, where all are happy according to their several capacities; and so it is in hell, where all are miserable if compared with the condition of the blessed, but in different degrees; and as in this life some are so unfortunate that it were better for them not to be at all, than to continue always in the state in which they are; so in hell, there may be some whose conditions is preferable to not being; tho' for Judas and such sinners, it had been better if they had never been.

The 3d part of man's punishment was that withdrawing of the extraordinary grace of God from him, that was ready to guide and direct him in all his actions, and leaving him to his own power and faculties to conduct and support him. So I understand the 22d ver. of the 3d ch. *And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us to know good and evil. And now lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live for ever. Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden.* Some take this for an ironical speech, whereby God mocked and upbraided man for his folly: But I rather think it, a declaration of the Divine Will: for since man had taken on him to choose for himself and to judge what was good and evil for him without consulting his Maker, therefore God resolved to deprive him of the supernatural assistance he designed to afford him, and leave him to his natural faculties to guide and direct him; let him be as it were his own God, and enjoy the fruit of his choice. To this purpose he deprived him of the use of the tree of life, drove him out of the garden where it was, and fenced it against him.

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The effects of man's being left to his own powers and faculties for his direction and support, are many and fatal. It is easy to shew, that from hence come all the errors and follies of our lives. For our understandings being finite, we are every moment at a loss; we are forced in most things to guess, and being unable to find truth, are frequently mistaken. From the same come all the sins, corruptions and crimes that overwhelm the world. For being left to our choice, we not only mistake, but choose amiss. One error or sin makes way for another; we proceed daily in corruption, and the infection spreads as the world grows older; custom, education and company do all contribute to make us worse and worse: And in nothing of this God is to be blamed: we bring them on ourselves, and they are not to be prevented without a miracle, which none can say, God is obliged to work for us. We may accuse ourselves and one another for our temporal and eternal evils, but must acquit God who has done us no injustice. He has allowed us a possibility of happiness, as has been observed before, and we by our sins make ourselves incapable of it. As to the children that die before they come to choose, we may be sure God will deal justly with them, and put a great difference between them and actual sinners. It is misery and hell enough for them to be deprived of those felicities to which they could not pretend but by the favour of God, and to be subjected to those sufferings that balance their *Being*, and hinder their lives from being a blessing to them. They are the seeds of rebels and traitors, and cannot expect any special favour from God.

Thus I have gone through the history of the fall of man, and shewed you the consistency and reasonableness of the account the scripture gives of it. Nor ought we to depart from the letter thereof; since the matter of fact is plain, that man is corrupted, that the literal understanding of the scripture accounts for it, and no other book or record gives any tolerable reason for it.

I might draw many useful observations from what I have said, but I shall content myself with two.

1st. You may see from this, that God did not think it fit that man should be absolutely happy in the state of innocence,

nocency, without revealed religion and the use of sacraments. For the discovery of what was good and evil, was to proceed from a continued communication of divine wisdom, which would have been equivalent to a revelation; and the trees of knowledge and of life were truly sacramental; they were outward and visible signs, and means of grace, which is the true notion of a sacrament. And then judge with yourselves, what pride and folly it is for any in this corrupted estate to pretend that they are too spiritual for such, or that they need them not in order to communion with God. Man in his state of perfection needed them, how much more must we in our present condition of corruption and aversion from God? Let us not therefore despise or abuse them. Death was the consequence of the violation of the sacramental tree in my text, and the same is threatened as the punishment of our abusing the christian sacrament, 1 Cor. xi. 29. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.* The neglecting of them is no less penal, John iii. 5. *Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.* And John vi. 53. *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.* These are expressly offered to us in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and we are sure in that the faithful feed on them. And though their feeding may not be confined to the use of the outward elements, yet whoever rejects them, debars himself of the spiritual food communicated by them: for when God has appointed means to obtain a blessing, it is reasonable to believe, that he will never grant it to those who neglect or condemn them.

But 2dly. As it is a great folly to despise the sacraments, so it is much greater madness to think of happiness without revealed religion. It is plain we have a prospect and eager desire of a future life, and in many circumstances there is nothing but that hope can make the present tolerable to us. But natural religion can neither give us any certain clear security of it, nor means to attain it. Revealed gives both; and the view is so comfortable to a good man,
and

and so useful to the world, that it seems to be an imitation of the devil's spite and malice to go about to deprive us of it. 'Tis this hope only can make all men equally happy, and send the poor, the unfortunate as to the circumstances of this world, and the oppressed, to be as contented as the greatest prince. 'Tis this only that can make us chearfully dispense with the miseries and hardships of life, and think of death with comfort. Except therefore these patrons of natural religion can shew as sure and effectual means to comfort us on these occasions as revealed religion affords us, they are spiteful and unreasonable; for they go about to take from us that which gives us patience in our sickness, relief in our distresses, and hope in our death; and offer us nothing in lieu of it. If a man be oppressed by his enemies, if he be in sickness, pain or anguish, if the agonies and terrors of death approach him, what comfort or support can he have without religion? What a dismal thing must it be to tell a man that there is no help, no hope for him, to bid him despair and die, and there is an end of him. Such reflections may make a man sullen, mad, curse himself and nature; but can never give him any satisfaction, without a well-grounded hope of a blessed immortality. Now only revelation can give the generality of mankind, especially the unphilosophical part of it, who are not capable of long or subtle reasoning, such a clear and well-grounded hope. For we may add to this, that if we take natural religion with all the advantages that reason can give it, yet the rewards and punishments discoverable by it are not so clear or determined, as to be a sufficient encouragement to such as are good, or discouragement to the evil. Revealed religion serves all these ends; and therefore we ought firmly to adhere to it, and not hearken to wicked and unreasonable men, or suffer them to wrest it out of our hands. It is our joy, our comfort and our life; it carries us beyond death, and secures our eternal felicity. Justice, and charity, and peace are the fruits of it here, and glory hereafter.

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